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ARTIST DEBT TO THE WORLD

J. W. PORTER

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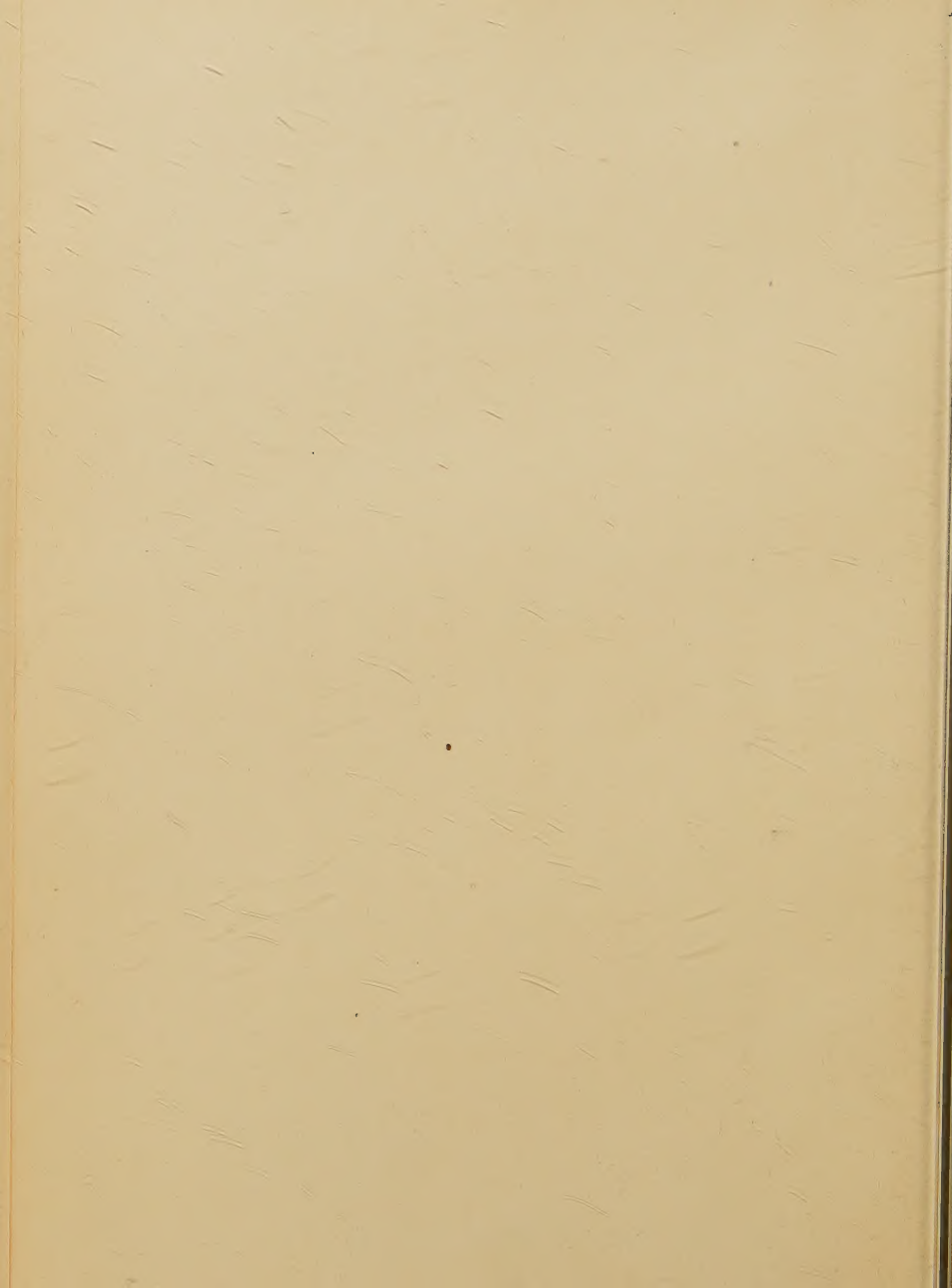
The Baptist debt to the
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The Baptist Debt To The World

BY

J. W. Porter, D.D., LL.D.

Author The World's Debt to the Baptists

Editor of the Western

Recorder

Doctrinal sermons



1953

Louisville, Kentucky

Baptist Book Concern

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THE BAPTIST BOOK CONCERN

INTRODUCTION.

After many years of intimate friendship and hearty co-operation with Dr. J. W. Porter, pastor, editor, evangelist and most zealous contender for the faith once for all delivered to the saints, I take great pleasure in introducing his latest volume, entitled, "THE BAPTIST DEBT TO THE WORLD," and other doctrinal sermons.

This volume is a compilation of many of the best sermons from one of the South's greatest preachers. It has been my privilege to hear Dr. Porter deliver these sermons. They are logical, convincing and persuasive. They are a presentation of Bible truths much needed to be considered by the world. They deal with the fundamental convictions of Baptists, and so well merit a most careful and prayerful consideration at the hands of all Baptists. They are from the brain and heart of one of the greatest living soldiers of the Cross. The author is known throughout the land as one of the foremost expounders and contenders for Baptist beliefs. He has probably done as much to conserve Bap-

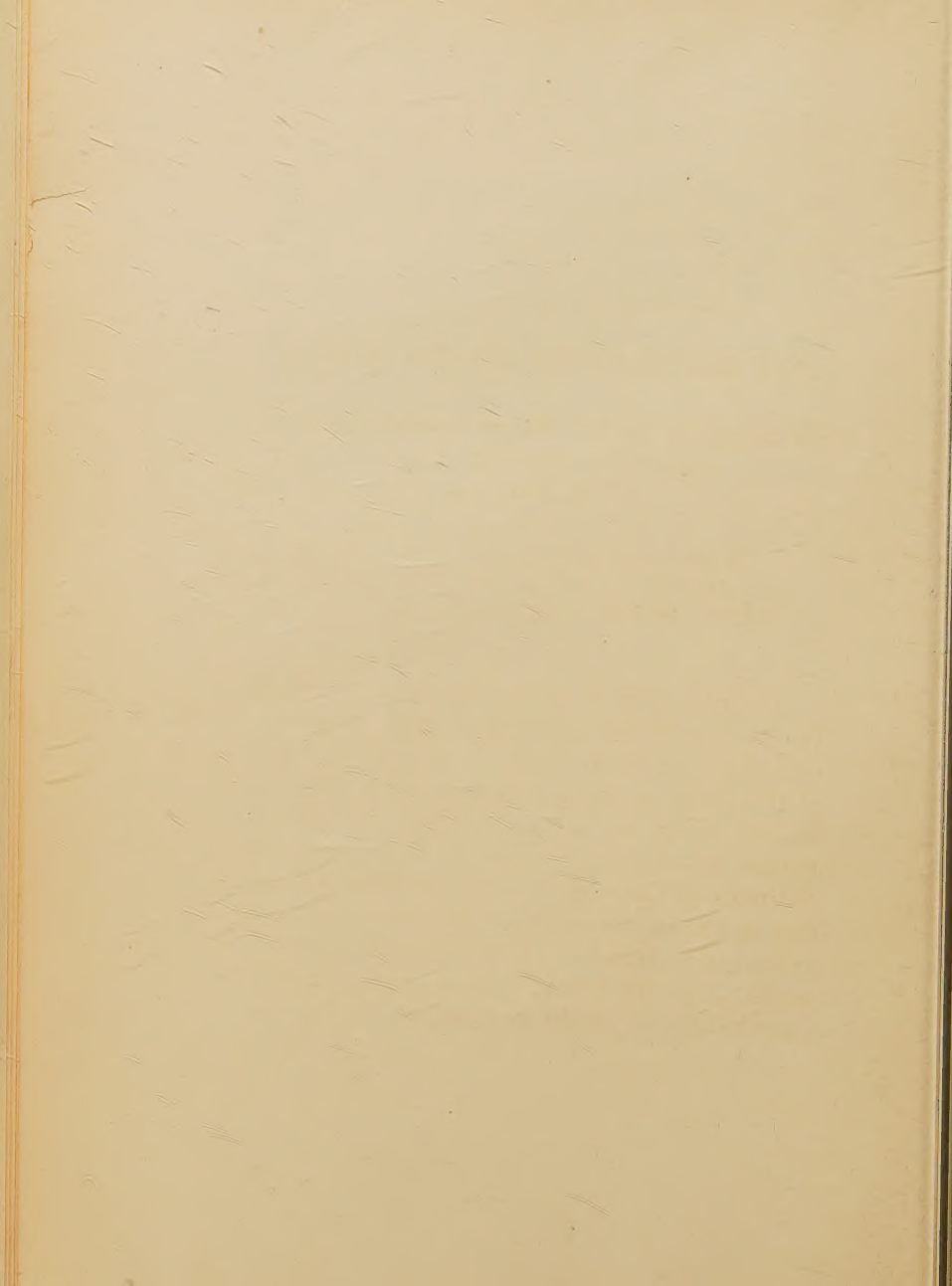
tist orthodoxy throughout the South, by his pen and from the pulpit, as any other living man.

As one who has given over seventy years of his life to the Baptist cause, I most heartily welcome the publication of this comprehensive Baptist message, and place my sanction upon it, and pray God's guidance as it goes forth to make Baptists of the sons of men.

W. E. POWERS.

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I.

“THE BAPTIST DEBT TO THE WORLD.”

(Introductory Sermon Before Southern Baptist
Convention, Houston, Texas.

J. W. Porter.)

“I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to
the Barbarians; both to the wise, and the
unwise.” Romans 1:14.

I would prove untrue to my feelings, and to
the feelings of the mighty host here assembled;
and above all to the cause of truth, were I not
at this point to express for you and to you, the
sincere sorrow we, one and all, feel over the de-
parture of one who did more for Texas Baptists,
and more to hasten the coming of Christ’s King-
dom in Texas, than anyone else who ever lived
or died in its broad and blessed domain. Without
naming him, the towering form of the Christly
Carroll rises in might and majesty before us.

Like Roderick of old, who gave his shrill whistle
to summon his men before Fitz-James—

“That whistle garrisoned the glen,
At once with full five hundred men
As if the yawning hill to heaven,
A subterranean host had given.”

And now we may say :

“Where was Roderick then?
One blast of his bugle horn
Were worth a thousand men.”

“The great men pass, we stand
Appalled and say,
How shall we live when
These have left our day?
How shall we fight when
Splendid leaders fall?
How work, when silent
Is their bugle call?”

He is gone, but in his going, like the setting sun, he has colored the sky with a flame of golden glory. He is dead, but he lived the life of an immortal, and died the death of the deathless.

May the Holy Spirit guide us in the quest of truth as we strive to study together the subject

to which I trust I have been providentially directed—"The Baptist Debt to the World."

In the final accounting, every man is a world asset, or a world liability. We are all debtors, and all should be creditors. We are all debtors to Christ, and should be creditors of His creatures. The fact that Christ is our creditor makes us debtors to a dying world.

A spiritual debt is more sacred than an ordinary financial obligation. Since every honest man will make a real effort to pay his debts, it should follow that every Christian will earnestly endeavor to discharge his spiritual indebtedness. The wilful failure to pay an ordinary debt entails commercial disgrace, and an unwillingness to pay spiritual indebtedness should be deemed doubly disgraceful, and an aggravated form of downright dishonesty.

Whatever may be our differences, we are all agreed that Baptists owe a debt to a dying world, and that, by the help of God, this debt shall be paid. And while it is true that Baptists have their differences, yet they are Baptist differences; and Baptist differences are more sacred to Baptists than alien agreement. For my own part, I would rather be a freeman and if needs be differ with my brother, than live in forced agreement for fear of the ecclesiastical lash.

After all, difference is not always a doubtful blessing; for while difference is always a sign of life, indifference is not infrequently a symptom of spiritual dissolution. In all our differences let us never forget that we are brethren, and woe be to him who would attempt to spy out our liberty; even to contend with one another.

The Baptist debt to the world is specifically stated in the Commission. The Commission as I see it, was given to the churches; and unless Baptist churches get their mission from the Commission, they are without a mission and should go out of commission. If the Commission was not given to the churches, then the churches are usurping authority in preaching, teaching, and baptizing, and should immediately cease their high-handed usurpation. So far as my information extends, Baptist churches are the only bodies that profess to carry out the Commission in the exact manner and order in which it was given. Many of the past and current theological controversies, probably unconsciously to those engaged in them, find their real source in the Commission, and here, if I mistake not, will be waged and won the world's greatest ecclesiastical battle.

I shall first attempt to define this debt, if not

according to our wishes, at least in a manner to meet the demands of Scripture. The initial item in this list of indebtedness is the command to preach the Gospel. Nothing, not even the printed page can ever take the place of the preached word, evermore the prophet must have his place. He cannot, as of old, foretell, but as a mouthpiece for the Almighty, he can declare. He is no longer the seer, but he can, and should, be the sage. The first and fundamental duty of the preacher is to preach, and preach the Gospel. Christ is a substitute for our sins, but there can be no substitute for the Gospel of Christ. Merry music; picture shows; spectacular and pantomime performances can never take the place of the Blessed Gospel of the Son of God. Such things may enchant for the moment, but they can never lead to Calvary, or grip and hold the heart of mankind—

“E’er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply;
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.”

Sociology is a good thing in its place, but its place is not the pulpit, but the school room. The world needs theology more than it needs sociology. Many make the mistake of beginning

with man and trying to work up to God instead of beginning with God and working down to men. In the beginning was God, and in the end will be God. Any system of sociology that does not begin and end with the blood of Jesus Christ, will inevitably end in confusion worse confounded.

At this point it is well to note that there is a vast difference between lecturing and preaching. Had Socrates contented himself with lecturing he would have never tasted the fatal hemlock. The difference between the lecturer and the preacher is, in many respects, the difference between Socrates and the sophists. The lecture may be popular; the Gospel is powerful. Instead of trying to popularize the Gospel, we had better polarize the pulpit.

We hear much now-a-days about a new Gospel. When it is demonstrated that there is a new God, a new Christ and a new Bible, then, and not until then, will I commit my life to a new Gospel. Apropos the story of Pauleaux, a member of the French Directory, who invented a new religion which he called Theophilanthropy. Seeing that his religion made little progress he complained to Talleyrand of the difficulty of getting the people to accept his religion. Whereupon Talleyrand told him to go and get crucified,

and to be buried and rise again the third day, and then go on working miracles; healing all manner of diseases, and then he would probably gain a following. I have but little faith in the pleaders, and no faith in the pleas that the old Gospel is losing its power. It is not the old Gospel that has lost power, but the preacher who has lost faith in the power of the Gospel. Far better lose your pulpit than your pulpit lose its power by you. The pulpit will lose its power only when its occupant has lost the Gospel.

"Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

I love life; yet I trust I shall not live long enough to cease to believe that the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; and therefore a sufficient rule of faith and practice, and abundantly sufficient for the salvation and sanctification of every sinner under the sun. The difficulty is, many have been dealing in dismal doubts instead of eternal verities, and hence a multitude of spiritual agnostics. We need a revival of faith in our message and in the God of our fathers until with Job of old we say, "I know that my

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Redeemer liveth." I can see the old patriarch and his black Arabian steed staked to his tent. I can see him as he stands alone in the silence of the night gazing into the serene and shining pathway of the everlasting stars. Though coming up out of great tribulation, I can hear him say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth. . . .yet out of my flesh shall I see God." In his unshaken assurance he clasps hands across the centuries with the princely Paul. I can see this giant of grace as he closes his last letter to his beloved Timothy. With trembling hand he writes, "I know Him whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." Ah, brethren, shall we not learn with the advancing years, that Christ is all—

"I entered once a home of care,
For age and penury were there,
Yet joy and peace withal;
I asked the lonely mother whence
Her helpless widowhood's defence,
She told me, 'Christ was all.'"

"I saw the martyr at the stake,
The flames could not his courage shake,
Nor death his soul appall;
I asked him whence his strength was given,
He looked triumphantly to heaven,
And answered, 'Christ is all.'"

"I dreamed that hoar-time had fled,
And earth and sea gave up their dead,
A fire dissolved the ball;
I saw the church's ransomed throng,
I heard the burden of their song,
It was 'Christ is all in all.' "

And just here I wish to affirm with all possible emphasis, that every preacher who believes in preaching and practicing the Gospel is, in some real sense, a missionary of the Cross, though he may not have gumption enough to know it, or grace enough to acknowledge it. There is no orthodoxy without missionary endeavor, and sometimes mighty little with it. The germ of regeneration is the genesis of missions, and a saved man will believe in the saving business. In my time, at home and abroad, I have seen many sad sights, and stood in many drear and lonely places; yet I am persuaded that the bleakest spot on this earth is not the Alhambra, rich only in ruins, or the Parthenon, the eternal study and despair of the architects of the ages; or the Coliseum with its crumbling walls and forgotten glory, but the bleakest spot of deepest darkness and unutterable desolation is the blasted heath of an anti-mission heart. It is an established fact that when the sinking Titanic was sweeping the seas with its wild cry for help, a near-by

vessel caught the cry and in a few moments could have been at the side of the sinking ship. But with inconceivable selfishness and unutterable cruelty, the Captain refused to go to the aid of the great ship, soon to go down with its cargo of men, women and children. I would rather bear the mark of Cain and the name of Iscariot, and go down to a grave of everlasting oblivion than to have been the Captain of the ship that refused to go to the aid of the Titanic. Were I that Captain, in my sleeping and in my waking moments, I would hear the wild shrieks of the dying, and see their awful and hopeless struggle against a watery grave, and the frightful picture, like Banquo's Ghost, would never down at my bidding. Yet I would rather have been the Captain of that ship, than with folded arms to sit in selfish silence, while men and women are daily dying about me without hope and without God in the world.

The next item in our list of indebtedness, and one on which we have made only a partial payment, is that of teaching, or our educational debt. I am not prepared to say, as a matter of strict exegesis, that education, as commonly understood, is taught in the Commission, but I do affirm with all confidence that it logically grows out of the Commission, and that it is a fact and

factor in carrying out the Commission. In some real, but limited, sense, the mission of the church may be defined by the words *magistra mundi*. If I mistake not, the century's and the church's call to culture is louder and clearer than ever before, yet the tree of knowledge is not the tree of life.

I would not, however, as is quite common among us, emphasize education for the sake of leadership, but rather for Christ's sake, and our country's sake. The final apology for culture is Christian service. We need educated men and women, who, by the alchemy of action, will transmute day-dreams into deeds of deathless devotion. We need knowledge applied to a worthy cause, and that cause, the coming of His Kingdom in all the earth.

Be it also understood that if Baptists have an educational debt, it is a Baptist debt, and can be liquidated only by Baptist teaching. And this leads me to say that every Baptist school is a Baptist asset, or liability, and I fear, in the past, they have been about as frequently one as the other. If a school is a denominational asset, we should support it far better than we have done in the past; if, to the contrary, it be a liability, we should change its character, or speedily arrange for its obsequies. It should be

fathered or funeralized. It may be true that a man cannot teach denominational mathematics, but if he cannot teach mathematics so as to put a premium on Baptist principles and incite to Baptist achievement, it is mathematically certain that he is unfit for a chair in a denominational institution. The man who cannot generate a Baptist atmosphere should be forced to breathe some other.

Strangely enough, our universities have proven our religious storm centers. From them have come the heterogeneous heretics, which, for sweet charity's sake, we call higher critics, but who are, in reality, enemies of the Cross. It is true, and may as well be said here as elsewhere, that the greatest tragedies of the last few decades have been our scholastic tragedies. As I speak, there rises before me the sainted and saintly form of Luther Rice, who, with a zeal that was consuming, rode over hill and dale to collect funds to found an institution that through the years might stand for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Where now is the school he helped to endow with denominational dollars? Its birthright has been sold for a mess of pottage, and its denominational relation changed for a cash consideration.

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

Just here we are called upon to face a question in casuistry as provoking as it is perplexing—"Why should the scholastic conscience be less sensitive than that of the ordinary individual?" It is a tragic fact that many of the denominational schools have, through their official representatives, certified in writing that they are in no sense sectarian or denominational, that they might be placed upon the pension list. This statement will probably not be particularly appreciated by those who have a peculiar penchant for the pie counter.

"Perish policy, perish cunning;
Perish all that fears the light;
Turn from man, and look above him;
Trust in God and do the right."

I believe I speak advisedly when I say that Christianity's greatest battle will be with a Christless civilization. Well may we pray to be delivered from a Christless culture. Like Absalom, civilization has turned to destroy its own parent. That civilization without Christ is more dangerous than unmitigated ignorance has been demonstrated in the present cruel conflict.

Christian education is, then, the universal imperative of our times. As it now appears, Christian education will find its greatest concrete expression in the Christian college, which, without doubt, is one of our greatest denominational assets. Nor is the day of the denominational college dead, as some have surmised, but is only dawning. Baptists must have a studio, but let them build it hard by Calvary, where all its learning will be tinted with the crimson of the Cross. Baptists must know books, but let them remember that the book of all books is the Book by which they must live, move and have their being. If our knowledge shall be sanctified by these sacred pages, all will be well, however discouraging the outlook. Using the figure of another, on the wildest night I have ever known at sea, and when it seemed that every leap of the mighty ship would be its last, I could hear the voice of the lookout, "All's well!" How false and foolish seemed his cry as it was lost in the wild shriek of the storm. But he spoke only the truth; and the mighty waves were breaking in impotent fury about the tempest-tossed ship, which was headed straight to the haven of rest. And so with the old ship of Zion, the wild waves of cruel and accursed criticism may beat mercilessly about her, but the angels of God are on

the look out and she is headed straight home!

Another item in the list of our indebtedness, and one we cannot deny if we would, and would not if we could, is the duty and debt of baptism. It is ours to baptize according to the Gospel. To do this we must have a Scriptural subject, which, according to the New Testament, can be only a believer. Baptists do not, as they have sometimes been charged, believe in baptismal regeneration, but in the baptism of the regenerate. A child must be born a child, and when born, cannot be unborn by the world, the flesh or the devil.

It would appear far more sensible, and equally as Scriptural, to baptize a man to cure consumption of the lungs as to cure consumption of the soul. I know that baptism will not remit sins, as I have baptized those who give abundant evidence that they still retain them. We reach the Jordan by way of Calvary, and not Calvary by way of Jordan. The difference, though it may appear insignificant to some, is the difference between works and grace, water and blood. The tide that washes life's sinful shores is a crimson tide; the thread that binds man to God is a scarlet thread. When Stonewall Jackson lay in state, in Richmond, Virginia, one of his old soldiers asked of the sentry that he be per-

mitted to see the body. He was informed that the hours for receiving visitors were past, and that he would not be admitted. Shaking his armless sleeve, the old warrior said: "I lost my arm in the Valley Campaign, and in the name of the blood I shed, I ask to see my Chieftain." The doors were opened, and the old soldier for a few moments silently gazed upon the face of him who, in several respects, was the world's greatest military genius. Through His blood—Lord of Lords and King of Kings—and His blood alone and only do we look for salvation from sin.

"He breaks the power of canceled sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood availed for me."

And mark you, we are commanded to baptize, not rantize. Here, too, the command must be paid in Scriptural and not in counterfeit coin. So far as I am informed, no other denomination administers baptism in the same way and for the same purpose as Baptists. Indeed, they have a Scriptural baptism all their own, and, which like the gold dollar, is taken at full face value in all the ecclesiastical markets of the universe. It was true yesterday, it is true to-day, and will

be true to-morrow that here, as elsewhere and everywhere, only things that are equal to the same thing are equal to each other. According to Holy Writ, there is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. It would be no more difficult to prove two faiths and two Gods than to prove two baptisms. Christ is our substitute, but there is no substitute for the command of Christ. Believer's baptism is the Baptist trust of the ages, and must be sacredly kept at all costs to the end of time.

And now, Fathers in Israel and Fellow Citizens in Zion, I beg that you heed my prophecy, the day Baptists cease to make believer's baptism a test of church membership, that day is the identical day they will sign their own death warrant and earn their right to rest forever in a dishonored denominational grave.

It should be said, and probably there is no better time and place than here and now to say it, that if the bewitching dream of Church Union is ever realized, it must rest upon the only possible and plausible basis of One Lord, One Faith and One Baptism. For such a day, we hope and pray; and that we may hasten its dawning, let us continue to declare the truth, until "Jesus shall reign".

Let us now turn our attention to the way in

which this indebtedness may be discharged. First of all, and perhaps chiefest of all, this debt can be liquidated by preaching a pure Gospel. It goes without saying, that a Gospel is pure or impure, and cannot be pure and impure at one and the same time. Like a dollar, it must be genuine or counterfeit; of full value or valueless. The greater the pity, that people should be more exacting as to the purity of their daily bread than they are concerning the divine manna; more careful to observe the rules of sanitation than the terms of salvation. With all, a little fly will spoil the choicest pie, while a little error in spiritual things is often deemed altogether palatable. A little poison may spell death in the pot. One drop of iodine will discolor many times its weight in water. A falsehood may be told in many ways; the truth in only one. The truth is not inclusive, but exclusive. Two plus two equaled four in the Garden of Eden and will when life's little day is ended. Not only does it equal four, but it equals nothing more nor less than four.

We are told that it makes no difference what a man believes, as long as he does right. It would be nearer the truth to say it makes no difference what a man does, if he believes right. One is neither saved nor lost for what he does, but by what he believes. The man who believes

that one thing is as good as another, is himself good for nothing. He who loves truth will hate error, and this hatred for error will be in proportion to his love for the truth. We need a revival of holy hatred for the impure; yea, the spirit of Him who said, "Do not I hate the abominable thing?" The man who follows the line of truth, will find himself going in the opposite direction of error.

We must learn that we are stewards of doctrine as well as of dollars; of the Gospel, as well as of gold. We need a stewardship of faith as much as we do of finances; for finance, without faith, is dead; or at least alive only to the Devil.

Let not a false conception of love prevent us from contending for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. If I rightly discern the signs of the times, a lawless love will prove the curse of our century. Christian contention is the inevitable logic of Christian conviction. Christianity is not only conciliatory, but contentious. A dearth of conviction will result in the death of contention.

To be sure, our contention should be in love. We should beget love if we have been begotten of it, for only the Christlike can conquer for Christ. To win, we must be winsome; but winning is not worth while unless it means a victory for the

truth. There can be no peace between truth and error until one or the other has found a forgotten grave. But truth must triumph.

I know not what others might do, but for my part, were I forced to choose between my family and my faith, with a heart bursting with a boundless love, and eyes blinded with unavailing tears, I would kiss good-bye to wife and children, and cling to the faith of my fathers. And in so doing, I would console myself with His words, "Unless ye forsake father and mother, houses and lands, yea and your own life also, ye cannot be my disciples." This, to some, may seem infinitely "narrow," but let us not forget that it is the broad way, made for broad people, that leads to destruction; while the "narrow way" leads through the wilderness of life straight home at last.

Let us, then, stand like an oak on the storm-swept hills, laughing at the fiery lightning, defying the furious flood, and waving its challenge to the rolling thunders.

Not only must we preach a pure Gospel, but

to meet our obligations, we must preach the whole Gospel.

May the God of all grace and truth deliver us from a fragmentary Bible and a fractional Gospel. We are commanded to observe all things "I have commanded you," and not what the people may demand of us. The minister cannot rightly divide the word of truth unless he has accepted the truth in its totality. In the last analysis, the Gospel is a unit, and can never be self-contradictory. It is not only indivisible, but also indestructible. A half-truth may be dynamic, but certainly it is dangerous. Jesus saves, is a portion of the truth concerning salvation; but in all of its completeness, it demands its complement—Jesus keeps. I here state as a Baptist axiom, that a Baptist church should never place itself in a position where it will be under any obligation, expressed or implied, to withhold any part of the Gospel.

If we fearlessly preach a full Gospel, it may put us out of harmony with the spirit of the age, and also with many noble spirits; but happily for us, if it keeps us in harmony with Him who is the author of life and death. As of old, they cried to Him who was dying at duty's door: "Come down from the Cross," so the call comes today to the faithful soldier of the Cross. No,

"The consecrated cross I'll bear,
Till death shall set me free.
And then go home my crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me.'

Possessed with the spirit of compromise, Moses would never have refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, but would have enjoyed the pleasures of sin for a season. With it, Daniel would have never entered the lion's den and bequeathed far-off generations an example of deathless devotion. With it, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego could never have entered the fiery furnace and come forth with their clothes not smelling of fire, but of myrrh, aloes and cassia out of the ivory palaces. Swayed by this spirit, Paul would have never sung praises to God at midnight in a prison. With it, the Baptists of Virginia and Rhode Island would not, at the price of blood and tears, have won for the world the priceless boon of religious liberty.

Be it ours to preach the whole truth, though by so doing, we join the disembodied spirits of the brutal Bastille, and with our spiritual ancestors glorify the guillotine.

"He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never
know defeat;

He is summoning the souls of men before His judgment seat;

Oh, be quick, my soul, to answer Him, be jubilant my feet;

Our God is marching on."

Brethren, preach the word, and with the smile of God, you need not fear the frown of man. You whose ancestors were nurtured among the rending rocks, and whose eyes saw the sun die away in the darkness, and whose ears heard the words, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," will verify the promise that, "My word shall not return unto me void, but accomplish the end whereunto I sent it".

Contend for the right, and when the smoke of battle has cleared, the Lord of Hosts and the holy angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, and good men and women will shout the welcome, "Hail! the conquering hero comes."

The last, and by no means the least, is our duty to preach the Gospel to the whole world. Until this is done, it is impossible to discharge our indebtedness to the world.

The fact of individual redemption is the fiat for universal evangelism. The Commission is a command, and it is our duty not only to come to Christ, but to carry Him to others. We come to carry. The field is the world and not any par-

ticular part of it. We are to go not only to the uttermost parts of the earth, but to all the earth. The Commission is not provincial or territorial, but cosmopolitan and universal. It is bounded only by time and the universe.

With the French, home missions mean missions in France; with the English, home missions mean missions in England; but with God, missions mean the map of God. We must preach the Gospel to every creature in all the earth. The solidarity of humanity is the assumption and the imperative of missions. Some day, and may God hasten the day, we shall come to know that the cannibal is our cousin, and that the despised and desolate denizen of the brothel should become our sister, by saving grace, through the blood of Him who died to redeem us one and all.

"Go preach the Gospel to every creature," is the mandate for world-wide missions, and the marching orders of the redeemed. While the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America is dividing territory, let Southern Baptists continue to divide the word of truth. It is well, too, to bear in mind just here, that it was not the uncultivated masses but the Christless classes that crucified Christ. To the neglected rich, and the forgotten poor, we must carry the message of Christ. Someone has surmised that

Peter protested when Christ commanded the disciples to preach the Gospel to "every creature." That Peter replied, "Lord, do you mean for us to preach forgiveness to the man that placed the crown of thorns on your brow?" But in tones of unspeakable pathos, the Master answered: "Preach it to every creature." Stunned and staggered at such infinite forgiveness, Peter said: "Shall we preach forgiveness to the merciless wretch who plunged the spear into thy side?" As never man spake, soft and low and sweet, the Master says: "Go preach the Gospel to every creature."

I know not to what extent America may become a world-power, but I do know that the best way for our nation to become a permanent world-power, is to demonstrate God's power in the world. I cannot speak with assurance, or authority, as to "manifest destiny," but with all my heart, I do believe that the present cruel conflict points the path to the splendors of American missionary achievement. I know not whether the Constitution follows the flag, but this I know, the blood-stained banner of Calvary waves in protecting triumph over the head of the lonely missionary. And at this moment where'er he be, on land or sea, as he lifts his eyes to the

kindly skies and gazes into the mystery of the milky way, with his soul he may say—

"I know not where His islands lift,
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care."

"And so beside the silent sea,
I wait the muffled oar;
No harm I know can come to me,
On ocean or on shore."

"The 'LO!' is inseparably connected with the 'GO!' "

The ranks of the missionary may be decimated by death, but others will take their places on the far-flung battle line. The missionary may be buried, and the winds of ten thousand centuries sweep over his forgotten grave, yet the hand of an angel shall write the epitaph of the hero of the Cross, and his name shall be heralded in heavenly history forever and forever.

Brethren, I believe we have trifled long enough with the eternal issue of the missionary problem. We should not cease praying earnestly "Thy Kingdom Come," but it is high time that we were willing to pay for His Kingdom to come. The world may not understand our orthodoxy, and it would be infinitely wiser and better if it

did, but it can comprehend our offerings. Last year, our nation spent a billion and a half for strong drink; 800 million for tobacco; 750 million for jewelry, and more for chewing gum than for all mission causes. In spite of this, it is a fact that when missions fail, God's Kingdom fails among the children of men. It would seem that it is about time we were practicing our prayers. A confession of faith should be tantamount to a missionary subscription.

I entertain the profound conviction that the next decade will largely determine the denominational destiny of the world. Hence the greater necessity for a mighty forward movement—move forward! move forward! move forward all along the line.

I have seen the great creation of Louis David, known as "Napoleon Crossing the Alps." Here and there are myriads of soldiers plowing their way through snow, men and horses are trying to carry the cannon up the steep; while far in advance is seen the wizard warrior, with deathless determination written upon his face, and his hand pointing to the heights above.

A greater picture is the host of the redeemed pressing over mountains of difficulties, to carry the Gospel to the lost.

I am not unmindful of the seeming effect of

the present war upon mission work. True, the enemies of the Cross may revel in ghoulisn glee, for a time; the night stars of hell may shine with brighter luster, for a little while, and the sons of Satan may shout with redoubled joy, for a season, but their seeming victory shall be their sure and everlasting defeat. For peace, permanent peace, shall come, and its coming is as sure as the coming of Christ's Kingdom in the heart of man.

Out of the black storm of war the radiant rainbow of light and love, and joy and peace will be born, and its angelic arch shall circle the earth in enduring praise.

"Peace, peace, wonderful peace,
Coming down from the Father above,
Sweep over my spirit, forever I pray,
In fathomless billows of love."

Thank God, the gentle dove of peace shall yet displace the fierce eagle of war, and wild flowers will yet bloom o'er the erstwhile blood-stained battlefield. In the mute mouth of the forgotten cannon, singing birds shall find their nesting places, and in trenches once drenched with brothers' blood, the lamb and the lion shall lie down together. Then shall the only artillery be

the artillery of prayer that sweeps the heavens with conquering power. For the booming of the cannon and the roar of musketry have given place to the anthem of the skies—"Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will to men."

"When the war-drum throbs no longer
And the battle-flags are furled,
In the parliament of man,
The federation of the world."

Standing on the promontory of today, we behold in the dim distance the silent cemetery of the buried centuries. We read the epitaph, which tells in mournful numbers of the failures and successes of the serried years. For the moment, we stand downcast and disheartened, and even faith seems to falter; but we hear the song of the Psalmist—"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

From the exalted eminence of today, we behold the wreck of many blighted hopes and blasted ambitions. In the presence of our humiliating failures, we stand staggered and discouraged; but lest we faint, there falls about us a light that never fell on land or sea, and by it we

read the mystery of our tears and the divinity of our defeats. With this light comes the messenger of the morning, and he speaks, as only the Son of Man can speak—"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." And our souls answer back,

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Twas grace that brought me on thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

From our vantage ground, we strive to look into the far future and read the story of the coming years. The distant sky seems blackened by many a cloud, and disturbed by many a storm, but from far over the everlasting hills we hear the clarion cry of Christ, "I am with you even unto the end." As we listen to the pledge of His perpetual presence, we exclaim with the princely Paul, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

Let us then take heart, for this we know, that by and by, in God's own good time, God's tomorrow shall become God's today, and by the alchemy of divine power the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ. Let us hope and pray, and work and give, that the day may not be far distant when the mountains shall whisper to the sea,

“Redeemed,” and the sea shall murmur back to the mountains, “Redeemed”; and land and sky and sea together shall sing, “Redeemed! Redeemed! Redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb!”

Then shall America shout aloud, “One Lord!” and Europe and Asia shall answer back, “One Faith!” and Africa and the Isles of the Ocean, shall shout back, “One Baptism!” and the whole earth, and the angels of Heaven shall swell the far resounding chorus: “One Lord, one faith and one baptism,” for the knowledge of the Lord has covered the earth as the waters cover the sea. Then, with loud hallelujah, and universal hosanna, and everlasting Amen! and Amen! we will praise the God from whom all blessings flow; for His Kingdom has come and His will is done on earth, as it is in Heaven!

II..

“THE OLD PATHS.”

“Ask for the Old Paths.”Jer. 6:16.

“I am the Way.” John 14:6.

Our age may justly be charged with discrediting the deeds of other days and underestimating the attainments of other times. We have fallen upon times when age antiquates rather than sanctifies; when the truth of yesterday is deemed the fable of today. The spirit of novelty has touched and tainted even the spiritual realm. “Give us the new,” true or untrue, is the cry of our country. The landmarks of twenty centuries are the laughing stock of many of our generation. In the social, political, and religious world, there seems a determined desire to break away from the old moorings, and without chart or compass, to drift on unknown seas. To what extremity this tendency of our times may yet lead us, it is difficult to determine. At all events, the time is at hand when we should sound a note of alarm, and diligently seek the old paths.

Let us, then, note some of the characteristics of the old way. First of all, it is an OLD way. The Ancient of Days has established it, and while we should make progress, in this way, it must be progress in the God-appointed way. It is not to be progress out of, but in, the old way. It would be well for us to realize that there are eternal verities that neither time nor chance can change or improve. Two plus two equaled four in the garden of Eden, in the morning of time, and will equal exactly the same thing till time shall be no more. A circle is perfect and complete, and even the higher critics cannot improve on it. And this leads me to say, that there can be no such thing as a new truth, or a new theology. A new theology would imply a new "theos"; and a new religion presupposes a new revelation, which, according to Scripture, we have no right to expect. Truth is as unchangeable as the God who gave it, and until His nature changes His truth, His truth must remain unchanged. Well may we sing,

'Tis The Old Time Religion."

It was good enough for Broadus,
And for Eaton in his day,
And we are glad that we can travel
In the good old-fashioned way.

I love to think of "my church"—a Baptist church—standing the test of the centuries, and coming down the ages conquering and to conquer. Nor can it be gainsaid that any church, which is not two thousand years old, is too young to demonstrate its divinity by divine declaration, or predicate its perpetuity by inspired prophecy. The church whose charter is not issued by Christ, and whose credentials are not in Christ's handwriting, must, sooner or later, see the handwriting on the wall. Every man-made church must share the fate of man, and since it has been appointed unto all men once to die, so shall it be with the work of their hands. True, there are those who hold that all churches, however much they may differ in doctrine, are church branches. The church-branch theory, at best, argues far more for the hearts than it does for the heads of those who hold it. Things that are not equal to the same thing never can equal each other. It is hardly thinkable that Christ would institute two churches diametrically opposed to each other and then tell us that a house divided against itself cannot stand. The final criterion in all ecclesiastical contention, is the sign-manual of the Saviour, and sanctity and succession, must alike characterize the church that was built on the rock. Though hoary with age, time writes

no wrinkles on its brow, and being born out of the divine purpose, it was never born to die.

The child of Corsica, standing under the shadow of the pyramids, on the eve of a great battle, and pointing to the pinnacle of the mighty monument of stone, said, "Men of France, from yonder height forty centuries look down upon you." So tonight I offer you the inspiration of a like, though infinitely greater, truth when I say, "Baptists of Kentucky, two thousand years of church achievement look down upon you, to woo you by the witchery of years, and beckon you to greater things for the coming centuries."

Along this ancient way, hovers a mighty cloud of witnesses, the disembodied spirits of our deathless dead encouraging us in the way, for "they too once went sorrowing here." And though the old way leads through mists and shadows, through tears and strife, it leads at last to a city whose builder and maker is God.

"I saw a wayworn traveler
In tattered garments clad,
And struggling up the mountains,
It seemed that he was sad;
His back was heavy laden,
His strength was almost gone,
Yet he shouted as he journeyed,
Deliverance will come."

"I saw him in the evening,
His head was bending low,
He had o'ertopped the mountain,
And reached the vale below;
He saw the golden city,
His everlasting home,
And shouted loud hosannas,
Deliverance will come."

"I heard the song of triumph
They sang upon that shore,
Saying Jesus has redeemed us
To suffer never more;
Then turning his eyes backward,
O'er the race which he had run,
He shouted loud hosannas,
Deliverance has come."

This old way is a BLOOD-BOUGHT way, Blood at the beginning, blood all along the way, and blood at the end of the way. Abel's offering was acceptable because it was a bloody offering; and all down the ages to the coming of our King, the bloody sacrifice pointed to the Lamb of God for sinners slain. And after all is said concerning the difference of the two dispensations, the fact remains that every person who has ever been saved, has been saved by the same power—the dynamics of divine blood. It is as true today, as long ago, on an Egyptian midnight, that only the blood can divert divine wrath.

Probably no deadlier doctrine can be credited to the past century than immersion as a condition of pardon. Beyond doubt, the coming of Alexander Campbell has caused many to make water as indispensable as blood, and this to their everlasting undoing. Either Christ did or did not make a complete atonement; either his blood does or does not cleanse from all sin. To attempt to supplement the atonement, is to render it of non-effect. It is the blood of Christ, neither plus nor minus, that brings salvation to a lost and ruined world.

Standing a few years since on Golgotha—in or out of the flesh, I know not—it seemed that I could hear again the dripping of the blood, and into my soul came these words:

“Was it for crimes that I have done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree.”

Blessed be the blood! Blessed be the
blood of the Son of God! Back to the blood
be the cry of our century!

Another characteristic of this way is, that it is a NARROW way. Truth, by its very nature, is, and must be, narrow. Its meets and bounds are immutably established, and are as unchangeable as a mathematical equation. It is exclusive as well as inclusive; absolute, indivisible and never contradictory.

The modern cry for greater liberty in faith and teaching involves an undue liberty with truth, and is often raised to hide a horrible heresy. Truth offers all needed liberty to its votaries. Surely a train has more liberty on its track than in all the wide domain about it. The heavenly bodies have more liberty in their God-appointed orbits than they could have flying at random through unlimited space. The moment they leave their appointed paths, they become wandering stars, to be lost in the blackness of darkness forever. Of a truth there is a "broad way," made for broad people, and many there be that travel in it, but it leads to destruction. Personally, we prefer the "narrow way," for with all of its difficulties, it leads straight home at last. Truth abhors compromise, as virtue detests adul-

tery. Indeed, I know of no more pitiable spectacle, than spiritual politicians sparring for points under union rules. Christian union, by a process of compromise and cancellation, is a crucifixion of the Gospel of Christ. A real Baptist believes that he has the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and if so, what has he to compromise?

Really, the proposition to compromise one's faith is an insult to any honest believer, and should be resented as such. Pilate is dead, and Pilateism should not be permitted to live. According to the spirit of our times, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego acted very foolishly in going into a fiery furnace. Bowing down was a very small thing and to have done so would have shown a liberal spirit and avoided danger. Why should not Bunyan have compromised his faith and saved himself more than a decade of imprisonment? Can it be that our Russian brethren have acted unwisely in being sent to Siberia for their faith? Well may they say:

"My hair is gray, though not with years,
Nor grew it white in a single night,
As men have grown from sudden fears.
But mine has been the fate of those
To whom the godly earth and air,
Are banned and barred, forbidden fare;
And for this my father's faith
I suffered chains and courted death,
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling place."

We know of nothing more alluring, or more deadly, than the siren's seductive song of union. The tiger growls before he pounces upon his victim; the rattlesnake gives his deadly rattle before he strikes; the viper gives his horrid hiss before he implants his venom; the eagle gives his wild scream of warning before he seizes his prey, but union, in the guise of friendship, without warning, beguiles the unsuspecting from the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

While Christ was nailed to the Cross, dying at duty's door, he was urged to compromise and "come down from the Cross." Thank God, that he did not come down, but preferred crucifixion to compromise; death in the narrow way of

duty, rather than life in the broad way, without conviction or character.

After a long bloody day's battle, the Imperial Guard were called upon to surrender. In response to the demand, a multitude of voices shouted, "The Old Guard can die, they cannot surrender." So with Baptists, long ago they learned how to die for truth, and we trust that they will never learn to live without it.

Let us now notice some of the results of traveling in this way.

First of all, we may have the assurance that we are in the way. I would not say, that if we are saved, we must know it, but I do emphatically affirm that if we are saved, we should know it. Assurance should be the part and portion of every child of God, and he should by all means enter into his inheritance. Spiritual agnosticism is one of the current curses of Christianity. Believe me, it is not the Huxley without the church, but the Huxleys within the church, that are crucifying the cause of certitude among the children of men. "I don't know" never healed a broken heart, or

built a Baptist church. Evermore it is true that "knowledge is power," power for time, and power for eternity.

The vast concourse of people who hear me to-night must, one and all, go down to the tongueless silence of speechless clay. The speaker of this hour must perish and pass to nothingness; but I know the power of his resurrection, and though I die and the winds of ten thousand centuries sweep over my forgotten grave, yet out of my flesh I shall see God. Well may we sing:

"Blessed assurances, Jesus is mine!
Oh what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of his spirit, washed in his blood."

Another blessing of walking in this pilgrim path, is perfect safety.

The thought of apostasy, though inspired by Satan, has been the nightmare of the centuries. Opposed to this horrid dream of sin, is the everlasting security predicated upon the eternal purposes of God. The steps of the saint shall be steady as the walks in the way, for his

feet are upon the everlasting rock of ages, and his brow is kissed by a cloudless sky.

Human birth is used to illustrate the relationship between God and his children. This, it will be readily seen, expresses an unchangeable relationship. My son is my son, whether he dies in a church or a saloon. The saint may lose his life, but he cannot lose his soul. One may be born again, but he cannot be unborn. It was to those whom he had never known, that He said, "depart."

He who walks in this way, will wish others to travel with him in the way.

The man who is willing to go to heaven alone, would be lonely there, provided, of course, he should get there. The mission spirit should mark those who journey to the better land. We should, of course, be concerned about our own kinsmen, but our concern should not end with them. We should begin at Jerusalem, but should end at the uttermost parts of the earth. The conquest of Kentucky is a laudable undertaking, and, I

believe, the God-given task of Kentucky Baptists. For, while the sun does shine bright on "my old Kentucky home," it will shine brighter by far, when the "Son of Righteousness" shall rise with healing in his wings o'er all our hearts and homes.

It is estimated that there are now more than one million unsaved souls in our Commonwealth. From mountain and plain and river is heard the cry, "Come over and help us." Will we hear the cry, or shall we turn a deaf ear to the plaintive wail of this mighty host? God Almighty forbid. We have tarried long enough, the time is at hand when we must "go."

And when we have won Kentucky for Christ, then shall we seek to win the Southland for the Son of God. The South, with all its flowery fields and sun-lit seas; the South, with all its matchless memories, its splendid present and glorious future, must be saved for Christ and the

Baptists. The principle of patriotism, alone, should be sufficient to compel us to labor for the redemption of our beloved land. We have the men and the money, and Almightiness walks majestically by our side. The day of destiny is at hand; the clock of fate has struck the hour; let us to the work, men and women of the Master!

And when our Sunny South shall sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, then shall our motto be, "A Continent for Christ." We will labor, give and pray, till this nation shall come into its "manifest destiny"; till in all its broad domain Jesus Christ shall be "Lord of all." So that when the sun shall rise in the East, his earliest rays shall kiss with blessing a body of baptized believers; and in all his flight in the heavens, he shall never cease to see some church, some college, dedicated to the living God, and when at last he sinks to rest in the far away West, he shall whisper goodnight to some heart, some home, consecrated to triumphant truth.

Nor would we rest even when America has sought and found its Maker and its God. We would send the Gospel to the regions of darkness beyond. Far, far across the wild, wide sea, we will seek to send the Gospel to the teeming millions who sit in the shadow of death.

III.

“CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH.”

“Contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.” Jude 3.

We live in an age in which dogmatism is discounted and contention is counted a curse. Many do not seem to know what they believe; or to believe what they know. There is a deadly indifference concerning the faith, and a lack of conviction that is appalling. Owing to a dearth of conviction, contention, in spiritual things, is, by many, looked upon as a matter of bad taste, if not perchance of bad morals. A little thought will, we believe, convince anyone that the conviction and contention are inseparable. On every hand we hear that “one church is as good as another,” which in its last analysis means that one faith is as good as another. Strangely enough, men exercise more care in selecting material than spiritual things. The man who is seeking a wife will hardly say that one woman is as good as another; yet there is no greater

difference in women than there is in doctrines.

In this text, we are specifically commanded to contend. Nor should this be counted strange, as life itself is a ceaseless contention. The babe's first and last battle is for breath. The farmer must contend with the stubborn glebe, that it yield the harvest. The student must contend with his books; the mariner with the sea; the astronomer with the stars. The world's biggest battle is **the battle for bread**; which constitutes life's chiefest contention, from cradle to the grave. Observation and experience teach us that man will contend for that which is dear to his heart. Hence his contention for honor, life, and liberty. Had it not been for the age-long contention of Baptists for religious liberty, the world would yet be bound in the chains of ecclesiastical slavery. Freedom of the soul is the tribute of a constant and costly contention. "Pilgrim's Progress" was born out of a cruel contention. No ship can run out of a storm, it must contend with the wild waves if it hopes for a haven at last.

"Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?"

"Sure I must fight if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord;
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by Thy word."

Our contention in this connection is limited to "The Faith." It is well just here to maintain the distinction between faith and "The Faith." In most of the instances in which the word faith occurs, in the New Testament, it has reference to a subjective saving possession. In this general sense, every saved person possesses faith. "The Faith," as used in our text, is objective, and has distinct reference to a correlated system of Scriptural teaching. That it is "The Faith," and not "faith," which is referred to, is clearly determined by the use of the definite article. Without doubt, many have faith, and are therefore saved, and yet are not in the "once having been delivered faith."

It is our duty to contend for the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. It is well, too, for us to bear in mind that there is only one way to tell the truth. There are many ways to tell a falsehood, but only one way to tell the truth. Truth is absolute and indivisible. For example, there is "one Lord, one faith and one baptism," and until the New Testament ceases to be the standard of faith and practice, there

can be only one Lord, one faith and one baptism. It is as reasonable to assert that there are two Gods, as to affirm that there are two baptisms. No statement can be counted true that contains a particle of falsehood. We might as well say, that an excellent pie contains only one fly—one drop of iodine will discolor many times its weight of water. The metes and bounds of truth are fixed and unchangeable. Facts are kaleidoscopic, but truth is as unchangeable as the God from whom it comes. A fact of today may be a falsehood tomorrow; but truth is the same, yesterday, today, and forever.

The disposition nowadays is to compromise the truth rather than contend for it. It is proposed to unite the various denominations with their widely differing doctrines by a process of compromise and cancellation. To do this, the truth must be tortured and Christ crucified in the house of His friends. This for the simple reason that it is easier to martyr the truth than to be a martyr for the sake of truth. We are not commanded to compromise, but to contend for the truth. Better, a thousand times, that a man compromise his own honor, than to compromise God's truth. We have no right to be liberal with that which belongs to another. The man who is liberal with my pocketbook is a thief, and

he who is liberal with God's Book, is a traitor to truth.

Regarding the question of church union by compromise, it may not be amiss to say that there has been more falsifying about it in the pulpit than probably about any other subject. After all the spectacular speechifying about it, thus far no denomination has specified a single doctrine it is willing to surrender for the sake of church union. While other denominations are coquetting in this connection, let Baptists continue to contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Well may we sing:

"Like a mighty army,
Moves the Church of God;
Brothers, we are treading
Where the saints have trod;
We are not divided,
All one body we,
One in hope and doctrine,
One in charity.

"Crowns and thrones may perish,
Kingdoms rise and wane
But the church of Jesus
Constant will remain;
Gates of hell can never
'Gainst that church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise,
And that cannot fail."

Not only are we commanded to contend, and to contend for the faith, but to contend for "the faith that has been delivered to the saints." We are, by the terms of this trust, named as trustees of "The Faith". As trustees of the truth, we shall be required to render a strict account of our trusteeship. This faith has been committed to us that we preserve it in its purity, and contend for it throughout the whole world. It is not our business to apologize for, revise or reconstruct this faith, but to contend for it, as it has been delivered to us. The only liberty allowed, is the liberty to contend for the delivered faith; the only latitude, to contend for it as delivered. We had the legal right to decline the trust; but having accepted it, we are in honor bound to administer it according to the terms of the trust.

To faithfully discharge this trust will not always be pleasant, or apparently profitable. We cannot, however, afford to purchase popularity at the staggering price of truth. When we are tempted to "Come down from the Cross," let us remember that it is better to please God than men. If we are faithful unto death (not unto success), we shall receive a crown of life. Happy, then, the man who in that day for which all days were made, shall be able to say: "I have fought

a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Not only has this faith been delivered to us, but "once for all" delivered to us. If this means anything, it means that "The Faith" is a finality. In the very nature of the case, there can, therefore, never be any such thing as a new faith. A faith that is not approximately two thousand years old, is too young to meet the requirements of "The Faith". The Bible constitutes the sum total of revealed truth, and, "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

The pitiful efforts to "reform" "the faith," are not only foolish, but sinful. The truth is God-given, and therefore perfect. Political and social reforms may be needed and timely, but a reformation of the faith is a logical and spiritual impossibility.

The pitiful efforts to conform the faith to the "Spirit of the times" is the contemptible task of the ecclesiastical charlatan. "The faith" was completed, signed, sealed and delivered, and hence not subject to amendment or revision of any kind or character. It is our Christ-commissioned task to bring the world back to "The Faith," and not "The Faith" up to the world. Nations may rise and fall; civilizations may come and go, and the winds of countless centuries sweep in desolation o'er a wrecked and ruined world, but the once delivered faith, fresh with the dews of the morning, and throbbing with the deathless dynamics of a God-given life, shall move majestically on, conquering and to conquer, until it shall cover the world as the waters cover the sea!

IV.

“THE FINAL PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS.”

“Who shall separate us from the love of
Christ?” Romans 8:35.

There are but two great systems of theology; the one was given by God, the other manufactured by man. There are but two proposed plans of salvation; one by grace, the other by a curious combination of grace and works. As we shall see later, salvation by grace implies final preservation, while salvation by works demands the doctrine of apostasy. There are but two denominations, that believe God saves and keeps, and naturally and logically, these are the only two that believe in salvation by grace. Unfortunately, one of these denominations vitiates its theory of grace by its practice of infant baptism.

That there may be no possible misunderstanding, it is well that the doctrine be stated as it is taught in the Bible and believed by Baptists.

This doctrine does not mean that the saints will not sin. As long as we are in this world, we will sin. The history of mankind fails to furnish an example of a sinless man. Observation and experience alike teach that we are all sinners, but, thank God, many of us sinners are saved by grace. It is well to define the difference between backsliding and apostasy. Baptists believe in backsliding, and, unfortunately, like others, sometimes practice it. And though we backslide, we have access to Him who has promised to heal all our backsliding. Just how far a Christian may backslide, has never been determined, though we do know he will never go far enough to cease to be a child of God. Apropos the story of the man who said to Mr. Spurgeon, that if he believed he could never be lost, he would take his fill of sin. Mr. Spurgeon promptly replied with the question, "How much sin does it take to fill a Christian?"

Baptists do hold and teach that if one is born of God, such a one will die a child of God. That if one has repented towards God and trusted in Jesus Christ, such a one, in spite of his sins, few or many, is saved for time and eternity. The relation of parent and child cannot be changed by the conduct of the child. My son is my son, whether he dies in a church house or a barroom.

The world, the flesh and the devil cannot unborn a child. In other words, Baptists believe that when Christ saves a man, he is saved, and not savable, and that Christ is not only mighty to save, but mighty to keep.

Let us note some of the Scriptures that are usually relied upon to prove apostasy. Foremost of these is Hebrews 6:4-6: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame."

First of all, the statement is clearly made that "if they shall fall away" it is impossible to renew them unto repentance. The author, who was, as we believe, the Apostle Paul, goes further and states specifically, why if anyone should fall away, he would be lost, and lost everlastingly. Of such it is said, "they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame." It will be conceded that the only hope of salvation, either as a temporary or a permanent possession, is the shed blood of Christ. If, therefore, this blood has been tried

and failed, there remaineth no further atonement for sin. Whatever else these passages may be supposed to teach, it must be granted they teach the impossibility of salvation for the apostate. Even the avowed advocates of apostasy have realized this, and no longer offer these passages in support of their tantalizing theory.

It will be observed the author states a fact concerning a certain condition, though he does not state the probability or possibility of such a condition. As the lawyers would say, he made a hypothetical case, and one which should serve as a warning and an exhortation. Paul's conclusion was the inevitable result of his premises, but the fallacy lies in the fact that his conclusion is the result of impossible premises.

It is generally conceded that the letter to the Hebrews is of Pauline authorship. If this be true, and if it is further true that he teaches apostasy in this letter, it is also true that he flatly contradicts his teachings as found in his epistle to the church at Rome. If the closing verses of the eighth chapter of Romans do not teach the final preservation of the saints, then it is impossible to express this doctrine in the language of earth.

That Paul's proposition grew out of a supposition, is clearly shown in the ninth verse: "But,

beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." The "better things" here refers to something better than the deadly doctrine of apostasy, and something that "accompanies salvation." He suggests the impossibility of this hypothesis by "the things that accompany salvation". One of the things that accompany salvation is, once in grace, always in grace.

That his readers might entertain no doubt as to the certainty of their salvation, he tells them in verses seventeen and eighteen, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise, the immutability of His counsel, interposed with an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us." In the following verse, the inspired author refers to this hope as "an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast, and entering into that which is within the veil."

It will be observed that this "hope" is said to be "sure and steadfast." If it is sure and steadfast, it must be unfailing and incapable of loss. The very words preclude the idea of apostasy—God's oath is coupled with the character of this hope. In other words, this hope is as sure

as the fact that God will keep His oath, and God's oath must be broken before this hope fails, and any one of His children lost. We can hardly see how it would be possible to make a stronger statement of God's promise to keep His children than is made in these closing verses, and these verses are inseparably connected with verses four and six. If, then, it is true, as stated, that God's counsel is immutable; and if it is further true that it is impossible for God to lie, it is necessarily true that a child of God can never be lost. Until God's counsel shall come to naught; until His promises become mutable; until His oath is broken, and it becomes possible for God to lie, His children are safe and secure for time and eternity.

Much ado is made of the fact that Paul said of the Galatians, "Ye are fallen from grace." This, too, in spite of the fact that no reputable scholar or commentator, dead or living, ever claimed that this passage had any reference to apostasy. In the epistle to the Galatians, Paul was combating Jewish customs for the believers, and informing them that if they were to try to keep the law, they had fallen from a dispensation of grace.

The case of the foolish virgins is sometimes cited to prove apostasy. A careful reading of

the story will readily convince an impartial mind that there is no reference whatever to preservation or apostasy. The application of the parable is made in the thirteenth verse: "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the son of man cometh." The lesson taught is clearly that of watchfulness, and especially in connection with the coming of Christ.

Judas has sometimes been cited as an example of apostasy. Judas was one of the twelve, and did lose his apostleship; but not his religion, as he never had any to lose. He was not a child of God, but "the son of perdition." Christ says, "Did I not choose you the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" The implication is that he was a devil when chosen. There is no difficulty in proving that a devil goes to the Devil, but this is far from establishing the fact that a Christian may become a devil. Surely, one must be hard-pressed for an example of apostasy to have recourse to Judas Iscariot. Apropos the story of the debate on this subject between Brother Murrell, one of our mountain missionaries, with a brother missionary. His competitor cited the foolish virgins, the sow returned to her wallow, and the dog that returned to his vomit. In replying, Brother Murrell said: "Brethren, you

will please take notice of the character of witnesses introduced by my brother to prove apostasy. He has offered in evidence a hog, a dog and five fools." The effect may better be declared, than described.

It is, to say the least, significant that none of the advocates of apostasy have ever been able to demonstrate their doctrine by an example. It would seem nothing but fair that those who contend for this doctrine should furnish some samples of their faith. I have been young, and now growing old, yet, in all truth, I can say that I have never yet seen one who was once assured of his salvation, and who afterwards renounced all hope in Christ. On many public occasions, I have offered a reward of ten dollars to anyone, known as truthful, who would make an affidavit that he was once saved and knew it, and afterwards lost and knew it. This offer has been made to certainly not less than fifty thousand people, yet the reward has never been claimed. The nearest approach to a claim for this reward was on this wise: Some years since, a brother who heard us offer this reward, took us several miles in the country to show us a genuine case of apostasy. We were led to an humble home, and introduced to a kindly-faced woman, who was requested by our brother to

tell her experience of falling from grace. Without protest, we permitted him to lead his witness. In brief and pathetic words, she told how she once loved the Lord, and how she later fell from grace. We then wrote, in substance, the following statement:

"I hereby certify that I was once saved and knew it, and that I now have no hope of heaven."

We shall never forget how the good sister adjusted her glasses and began reading. When she reached the words, "no hope of heaven," she almost shouted, "Thank God, I have a little hope." Evermore there is a spark in the ashes, that the Spirit will fan to living flame.

We offer here only a few of the many passages that teach in unmistakable terms, the security of the saints. Deut. 33:27: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them." "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Prov. 4:18. "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John 4:14: "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish,

neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:28: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory." Matt. 12:20. "... Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:20: "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." Psalms 37:24.

There is a vast difference in getting religion, and having religion get you. It is the difference of the little child holding father's hand, and the father holding the child's hand. One is the hold of a human being, the other the grasp of God.

This doctrine is predicated, first of all, upon the purposes of God. In the eternal councils of God, before the morning stars sang together or the sons of God shouted together for joy, God decreed salvation to His Elect. Of His own sovereign mercy, without any merit on the part of man, He chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. "According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of

his will." Eph. 1:4, 5. As the architect sees the building before it is erected, as the sculptor the statue in the stone, so he saw and loved us, ere we knew Him.

To those who are turned away at the last day, He will say, "I never knew you." Christ will never say, "Depart," to anyone he has ever known.

The trusted eagle may seem at home, for a season, with the fowls of the barnyard, but when the flash of lightning is seen, and the crash of thunder is heard, he is up and away to his home on high.

This precious doctrine is also founded on the power of God. The only question concerning the security is, has God the power to protect and keep His own children? The natural father is willing, though he may not be able to preserve the life of his child. In its last analysis, the question is, which has the greater power, God or the Devil? The Devil is mighty, but God is Almighty. His power is supreme over death, hell and the grave. Not only is Christ mighty to save, but He is mighty to keep. He binds us with bands that time nor death can ever sever—

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;

That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no, never, no, never, forsake."

This great doctrine grows out of the plan of salvation by grace. If one is saved by grace, very naturally he will be kept through riches of grace. If one is saved by grace, he is not saved by works; for if of works, it is no more of grace. Granted we are saved by good works; it follows, that we are damned by bad ones. Hence it is, that all churches, which make good works a part of the plan of salvation, must and do believe in apostasy. This is not an accident, but the inevitable conclusion of a doctrinal premise. If my religion is my work, I will lose it; if it is God's work, He will keep it. If a child of God is lost, a part of God's work is destroyed, and something of His nature lost.

It will be admitted, that in order to get a child of God, the Devil must overcome the blood of Christ. Obviously, it will take the same power to overcome the blood of Christ in every instance as in any given instance. In other words, if Satan can get one child of God, he can get every child of God. If he can get every child of God, yet fails to get some of them, those he fails to get, are saved by the grace of Satan, and not by the grace of God.

Let me bring to you the glad assurance that if you have ever been redeemed by His blood, your feet are on the rock, whose base rests upon the foundations of eternal truth, and whose summit is kissed by a cloudless sky.

I can almost hear the old giant of grace as he answers his own question: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" He looks up, far up beyond the shining sun and silent stars, and asks, "Shall height?" He shakes his glory-crowned head and says, "Nor height." He then gazes down, deep down into the gloom of the grave, and asks, "Can death?" With infinite assurance he exclaims, "Nor depth." Then with rapt and parting vision, as all things pass in solemn review, he shouts in everlasting triumph, "Nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord."

V.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SCRIPTURAL CHURCH.

“On this Rock I will build my church
and the gates of Hades shall not prevail
against it.” Matt. 16:18.

For present purposes, the word church in this connection will be construed as referring to local visible bodies of baptized believers, and the treatment of the subject will be based upon this assumption. If there be any other sort of church than that of the visible congregation, revelation and investigation have alike failed to locate its whereabouts, or define its functions. God has never given it a mission, or man put it into commission. Such an inconceivable, intangible, invisible concern as the imaginary invisible church has never been known to convert anybody, to set forth the Lord's Supper, or to perform any of the functions of an actual church, or to do any sort of business on the arena earth, in the history of all time. There-

fore, the speaker proposes to deal with that with which we have to do—facts, not fancies, men, not myths; women, not words.

The primary characteristic of a Scriptural church is, that it must be of divine origin. It will be admitted that churches are, or ought to be, divine institutions. If they are divine institutions, they must be of divine origin, for no stream can rise higher than its source. To be of divine origin, they must come from God, “for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” That which is born of earth is earthy, and that which is born of Heaven is Heavenly. Like begets like, on earth or in Heaven, so far as we are informed. If, then, it be a fact that a church must be of divine origin, and to be of divine origin must have been instituted by Jesus Christ, it necessarily follows that no man has, or can have, a right to start a church, unless especially commissioned by Christ. Should any one claim this authority, it would be necessary to attest his authority by infallible signs and miracles, thus demonstrating the divinity of his mission, by Apostolic power and precedent. So generally has this been conceded, that no man of note has ever claimed the right to start a church. Martin Luther claimed only the mission of a reformer,

and never, at any time, the authority to originate a church. John Calvin admitted his work to be that of reformation, and nowhere sets forth the claim to start a church. John Wesley not only disclaimed any intention of forming a church, but died a member in full fellowship of the Church of England. Realizing his limitations in this connection, he strenuously resisted the separation of the Methodist societies from the Church of England. Alexander Campbell asserted that his mission was to reform the Baptist churches, probably not realizing the more than Herculean task of reforming the truth.

It is likewise worthy of note that the name of the founder still clings to nearly all the churches of human origin. For example, were I to start an independent movement and assume to call it a church, it would rightly be known as "Porter's church", but could not truly be called a Church of Christ. There are only three Christian bodies who claim to have been instituted by Christ or the Apostles—the Roman Catholic, Episcopal, and many Baptists. The origin of the Roman Hierarchy is too well established by secular as well as sectarian history, to be seriously considered in this connection. The beginning of the Church of England (Epis-

copal) during the life, and by the authority of Henry VIII., is well known and freely admitted by all accredited historians, being the verified and irreversible verdict of history.

It is comparatively an easy task, with a single exception, to ascertain the approximate origin of each of the various denominations; the historian, however, has not yet arisen who is able to find the beginning of Baptist Churches this side of the Apostolic period. If, then, the human origin of all other churches can be clearly established, it makes a strong case in favor of that church whose human origin cannot be established. Mosheim says of the origin of Baptist Churches: "They are lost in the remote ages of antiquity." Dr. Dumont, who was appointed by the King of Holland to ascertain the origin of the Baptists, reported, "That the Baptists may be considered the only Christian community which has stood since the days of the Apostles, and has preserved pure the doctrines of the Gospel through all the ages." Sir Isaac Newton declares, "That the Baptists are the only body of Christians that have never symbolized with the Church of Rome." Alexander Campbell, in his debate with McCalla, affirmed, "That from the Apostolic age to the present time, the sentiments of the Baptists and their

practice of baptism, have had a continual chain of advocates, and public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced." The Old Ship of Zion is an old ship, and was not launched in the last few centuries.

The second characteristic of a Scriptural church is that it must preach a pure Gospel. The Gospel is either pure or impure; it is absolute truth or unconditional falsehood. There is no such thing as partial truth or purity. It is self-contradictory to say that it is the truth mixed with a little error. As well say that a glass of water is pure with the exception of a single drop of poison. A man cannot be truthful and yet lie occasionally. A falsehood may be told in many different ways, but the truth has but one version, and that version is a finality. This may be called a narrow view of truth, but truth is and must forever be narrow, for it has its metes and bounds and its limitations are fixed and immovable. It is possible that a spiritual Pure Food Law would put many a Christian society out of business as the Pure Food Law has put a number of concerns out of commission.

Nor does truth ever conflict with itself, nor can one truth or portion of truth ever contradict any other portion of truth. It is unthinkable

able that Christ would call one man to preach a certain doctrine and then call another to preach a doctrine directly opposed to it, and then tell us that "A house divided against itself cannot stand." It is inconceivable that Christ would call one to preach immersion, and would call another to preach sprinkling; one to preach baptism as the answer of a good conscience to God, and another to preach baptism for the remission of sins. This would make Christ a contradiction and truth, "confusion worse confounded". This is not the sham and sentiment of liberalism, but the cold eloquence of fearless facts!

Within this narrow way, whose limitations are co-extensive with truth, there is ample room for broadest sympathy, limitless love and endless activity. As well might the heavenly bodies ask for greater liberty than they have in their God-ordained orbits as for the disciples of truth to ask for the broadening of its bounds.

A train has the greatest possible liberty while on its narrow track. The current plea for greater liberty in preaching and teaching is not a plea for real liberty, but for unlimited license to disport the vagaries and propagate the heresies of one who wishes a support from the people he is trying to betray. The old cry

of "Give me Liberty, or give me Death," may well be changed to read, give some people the liberty they crave and the denomination will promptly meet its death. A perpetual protest is truth's reply to the plea for liberalism.

Nor can there be any new truth until God makes another revelation and adds to the Bible another chapter. Truth is as changeless as the Christ who gave it. Let me charge you, preach the truth, preach it in its purity, preach it in its simplicity, and it will yet tell its tale of triumph, though it be to generations yet unborn. Truth unadulterated, truth unterrified, will usher in the day of universal redemption!

"Truth, crushed to earth, will rise again:

The eternal years of God are hers;

But Error, wounded, writhes with pain

And dies among his worshippers."

Nor can this truth in its perfect purity ever make any kind of compromise with error. Between truth and error, there is an irreconcilable conflict that must continue till the "Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ". The current talk of "Federation" and "Union" is anything but a compliment to our convictions of truth. I would

more readily talk of merging my family, nation or race than I would seriously speak of merging my church. Oil and water never have, and never will, mix, dreamers and imbeciles to the contrary notwithstanding. Such a scheme would be possible only by a process of mutual cancellation and this, to one who believes he holds the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, would be impossible. I have sometimes heard it said, "That I believe we are nearer right than anyone else." For my own part, I believe we are altogether right and I would challenge anyone, especially Baptists, to point out a single fallacy or falsehood in Baptist Faith or Polity. When I hear the plea made to Baptists that they come and unite with any other church, I am reminded of a great full-rigged ship that for years has battled with the tempest, riding in triumph the crested wave and surging billow; and now as the mighty old ship, with sails all set, is nearing in safety the harbor, a little fishing smack with a leg-of-mutton sail hails her with the salutation, "Come over and join us". I hear the reply of the Captain, "Stand off, you will be swamped by the swell from our ship." One thing is as good as another only with the man who is good for nothing. It is our mission to preach the untram-

meled truth, and undaunted, calmly await the victory!

The third characteristic of a Scriptural church is that it must keep the ordinances blameless, as instituted and observed by Christ and His Apostles. These ordinances (two only) are baptism and the Lord's Supper. By common consent, baptism is obligatory on all believers. That there is but one baptism is clearly taught in Eph. 4:5 "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." Nor will it suffice to say that there are two forms of baptism, for baptism is itself a form, and there cannot be two forms of a single form. Whatever, then, this baptism is, it will be granted by all who hold to the supremacy of the Scriptures, that it cannot be changed by any human authority. If then, any church or body of believers should, by teaching or practice, pervert or vitiate this ordinance, such church or society would, if it ever possessed it, forfeit, at least, this characteristic of a Scriptural Church. That this ordinance of baptism was, and is, by immersion, is emphatically affirmed by the Baptists, cheerfully admitted by nearly all Roman Catholic and Protestant commentators and reluctantly conceded by the rank and file of Christendom. Neither must the form or design of this ordinance be perverted. Bap-

tism is not a saving ordinance, nor can it ever supplement or supplant the blood of Christ, which cleanses us from all sin.

We may thank God that to the great Baptist brotherhood, militant and triumphant, has been committed the sacred trust of preserving inviolate the divine rite of baptism through all the ages.

That the participation of the Lord's Supper should be restricted to baptized believers, is a closed question in this presence, and will therefore be assumed. Granted then, that the Lord's Supper is dependent upon baptism, it necessarily follows that even a body of believers would not have the right to celebrate the one without obeying the other. The stereotyped phrase of "Close Communion" is not only a misnomer, as respects the niceties of speech, but meaningless and unwarranted in point of fact. The Lord's Supper is for all those who have complied with the Scriptural terms, and this is equally true of salvation from sin. The same Scriptural terms that would exclude anyone from partaking of the Lord's Supper in a Baptist Church, would exclude them from partaking of it in any other place. In other words, anyone has as much right to partake of the Lord's Supper in my Church, as he has to par-

take of it in his own, but unless he has complied with the Scriptural terms, he has no right to partake in either place. Nor has anyone the right to complain of being denied the ordinance when that one refuses to comply with the requirements of the ordinance. It is futile and foolish to complain of the logical result of voluntary disobedience. In law, one is estopped from taking advantage of his own fraud or negligence and the same plea of estoppel should hold good in regard to disobedience to spiritual things.

These three characteristics, with what they necessarily involve, will decide the right of any organization to be called a Scriptural Church and prove the final test of a Standing or Falling Church.

VI.

THE PERPETUITY OF A SCRIPTURAL CHURCH.

It may be well to define what is meant by the word perpetuity in this connection. It must not be confused with what is commonly known as Apostolic Succession. Neither the speaker, nor the people for whom he speaks, believe in Apostolic Succession. To the contrary, we believe that the Apostolic office ended with the Apostles, and that they have never had nor ever will have successors. But we do believe that Baptist churches were instituted by Jesus Christ, and that they have had a continuous existence ever since and will continue to exist as long as time shall last. We do emphatically affirm the succession of Baptists, in spite of imprisonment, blood and fire, as witnesses for the truth, and that He who hath preserved them, will continue to be with them till the end of the age.

We may demonstrate the reasonableness of this doctrine by analogy. Strangely enough, the

people who object to church succession, glory in the idea of succession along other lines. For example, we are proud of the fact that our race is hoary with age and rich with history, and that our species extend back to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. The Jews, with justifiable pride, point to Abraham as their father, Moses as their law-giver, and to a synagogue with succession throughout the centuries. A claim of uninterrupted succession to the days of Solomon, magnifies the mission of masonry in the eyes of mankind. The followers of Zoroaster assert, with unspeakable pride, that the fires which were lighted upon their altars by Zoroaster, have never for a single moment been lost. Many of our people love to know that their families go back to the days of the Revolution, and some to the days of William the Conqueror. Why, then, should the boast of a splendid and unbroken spiritual ancestry be despised or counted an unholy thing?

First of all, we predicate our perpetuity upon prophecy. It will be generally conceded that in the Old Testament Scriptures, there is clearly set forth the setting up of a kingdom, and that this kingdom was to be everlasting. This is the plain teaching of the following passages: "And in the days of these kings, shall

the God of Heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Dan. 2:44. "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation." Dan. 4:3. "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion throughout all generations." Ps. 145:13.

The cherished and oft expressed hope of Israel was the final establishment of the Messianic kingdom, which kingdom should endure throughout all generations. We believe that the highest concrete expression and manifestation of God's kingdom is to be found in the churches of Jesus Christ, and that the kingdom of God could not have endured without a continuous existence of the churches of Christ. We do not believe that the prophecies have perished, or the promises of God have failed. A Gibbon may write of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," but no historian will ever rise to write of the fall of God's kingdom among the children of men! A church may die, but the churches live; God may remove the candlestick, but He does not put out the light. The leaves of the forest may fall with the coming

autumn, but the great forests wave on in the winds of the centuries. The stone that was cut out of the mountain, without hands, shall break to pieces all other stones, but itself shall not be broken. Napoleon, on the eve of the battle of the Pyramids, gazing upon them in their solemn grandeur, said to the army: "Men of France, from yonder heights forty centuries look down upon you". As an inspiration to continued faithfulness, I would say to-day to all our churches, "Two thousand years of heroic history and tragic struggles attest the truth of the promises of God to our people."

We further affirm the succession of Baptist churches, from the express promise of Christ. The language of our text, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it," teaches as clearly and plainly as it is possible to express a fact in human speech that He would build a church, and that the gates of Hades should not prevail against it. The only question then is, "Has the promise of Christ failed of fulfillment?" But the question will be asked, "Were these churches, to which Christ promised perpetuity, Baptist churches?" In order to prove that the church He instituted was a Baptist church, it will not be necessary to demonstrate by history

the continuous existence of Baptist churches. This, indeed, would be difficult to do, as history was for a time in the hands of our enemies, and many of our people in their prisons. It may be asserted, however, with mathematical certainty, that there is not a single century that does not afford evidence of the existence of a people holding doctrines that now differentiate and distinguish us as a peculiar people. Granted, then, that there is a church which has had continuous existence, we may, by a process of cancellation, ascertain this church. With the exception of the Baptist churches, it is a comparatively easy task to ascertain the year in history, when each of the various denominations had their origin. It may be announced as the incontrovertible verdict of history that each of them had its origin several centuries this side of the Apostolic period. In fact, nearly all of the denominations frankly admit their human origin. In truth, the only denomination, apart from the Baptists, that has even the semblance of claim to any early origin is the Roman Catholic, and this church, by the common consent of Protestant Christendom, has neither the birth-marks, nor ear-marks of a Scriptural church. Their present faith and policy, when tried by New Testament truth, conclusively show the lack of

Scriptural origin or teaching. Nor do they need, in accordance with their faith, any Scriptural origin, for, with an infallible pope and council, they have the right to change, subtract, or supplement any portion of Scripture, or any doctrine of the church. If, then, it be true that Christ did start a church, and the church He started has had a continuous existence; if it be further true that the human origin of all other denominations can be proven and the origin of Baptist churches cannot be proven, then it must follow that the Baptist churches were instituted by Christ, and have enjoyed the unbroken existence promised them by the Head of the churches.

As has been said: "We must either suppose that there has been a Christian people existing in every age from the apostolic to the present, characterized by the same doctrines and practice, or, that there were periods in the intervening history when apostolic faith and practice had absolutely no representative on the face of the earth." Are we prepared to take the latter alternative? Have there been such hiatuses in the history of Christianity? No church, no Christian people to uphold the standard of a pure gospel, and bear witness to the truth as it is in Jesus amid a perverse and crooked gen-

eration? What, then, becomes of the Saviour's promise? Reasoning *a priori*, we must infer, I think, that there must be a continuous line of witnesses for the truth, not only as individuals, but as organized bodies, keeping the faith as originally delivered to the saints, and practicing the ordinances as instituted by the Head. It cannot then be 'arrogant'—nay, it is a duty we owe to the truth—to go into a careful and thorough investigation of historical sources to find out, if possible, such an uninterrupted line of witnesses. We beg leave to ask if the continuous line of witnesses from the Apostles to the Reformation were not Baptists, what were they? Surely no one of the present sects, having no earlier origin than the Reformation, will claim them. Were they, then, Latins, Greeks, or Baptists? Nor is this doctrine of the succession of Baptists a new one to our people. The writers of other days abound in reference to this cherished tenet. Not a few historians, unfriendly to our faith, have conceded the truth of our historical contention. Indeed, as we see it, our exclusive claim to be the only existing New Testament churches, must stand or fall with our claim to perpetuity.

Dr. James P. Boyce, who was the founder of our Southern Baptist Theological Seminary,

was a staunch advocate of this doctrine. But let his faith in this connection be determined by his own words, for, "though dead, he yet speaketh." I quote from "Memoir of James P. Boyce," by John a Broadus:

"The Baptists in the past have been entirely too indifferent to the position they thus occupy. They have depended too much upon the known strength of their principles, and the ease with which from scripture they could defend them. They have therefore neglected many of those means which extensive learning affords and which have been used to great advantage in support of other opinions. It is needless to say, gentlemen, that we can no longer consent to occupy this position. We owe a change to ourselves—as Christians, bound to show an adequate reason for the difference between us and others; as men of even moderate scholarship, that it may appear that we have not made the gross error in philology and criticism which we must have made if we be not right; as the successors of a glorious spiritual ancestry, illustrated by heroic martyrdom, by the profession of noble principles, by the maintenance of true doctrines; as the Church of Christ, which He has ever preserved as the witness for the truth, by which He has illustrated His wonderful

ways, and shown that his promises are sure and steadfast. Nay, we owe it to Christ himself, whose truth we hold so distinctively as to separate us from all others of His believing people; to whom we look confidently to make these principles triumphant; for whose sake, on their account, men have been ever found among us willing to submit to banishment, imprisonment, or martyrdom; and for whose sake, in defense of the same truth, we are willing now to bear the scorn and reproach, not of the world only, but even of those who love our Lord Jesus Christ.” —Memoir, James P. Boyce, pp. 136, 137.

Dr. Broadus, in his comment on the text of this discourse, says: “It most naturally means, according to the Hebrew uses, that the gates of Hades shall not swallow up the church. All earthly things go down through those dread gates, but Christ’s Church, for which He gave Himself, will never cease to exist.” An overweening desire to be called liberal, upon the part of some of our broad brethren, has caused them to cease to believe in, or contend for, this time-honored and Scriptural doctrine, and even to designate as “land-markers” those who do hold to the doctrine. Be it so, as we are still obeying Scripture, “remove not the ancient landmarks”.

“There is reason to think that in the middle of the twelfth century, congregations of Waldenses Baptists were gathered in Switzerland and France, under the name of Apostolici; for, in the year 1147, we find Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, complaining against the Earl of St. Gyles for favoring one of their noted teachers, named Henry, who is charged with ‘hindering infants from the life of Christ, the grace of baptism being denied them’.”—(Mosheim, Cen. 12, Part II., chaps. 5, 8.)

“Zwinglius, the celebrated Swiss Reformer, who was contemporary with Luther, Muncer, and Stork: ‘Is Anabaptism a novelty? Did it spring up in a day? The institution of Anabaptism is no novelty, but for one thousand and three hundred years has caused great disturbance in the church, and has acquired such a strength that the attempt in this age to contend with it appeared futile for a time.’ This carries our history back to A. D. 225.”—(Introduction to Orchard’s History.)

H. Bullinger invariably identifies the Donatists with the Anabaptists, or, as he styles them, “Baptists”. “They are,” continues he, “similar in every particular to the old Baptists.”

Bishop Bossuet, the great Catholic controversialist, complaining of Calvin’s party for

claiming apostolical succession through the Waldenses, observes: "You adopt Henry and Peter Bruis among your predecessors, but both of them, everybody knows, were Anabaptists."

But in the Syro-Babylonian desert, off the line of the church's main advance, primitive forms of Christianity, perhaps also of Essenism, still survived which the course of church history had left untouched. To these belong, on the one hand, Sabians (Baptists); on the other, the numerous Anchorets." (Op. 547, IX. Edition Ency. Brit., by Rev. F. W. Gotch, LL.D.)

According to this high and disinterested authority, Baptists can be traced to 618 A. D. The overwhelming presumption is that a denomination whose history extends to this remote date must seek its origin at the original source of the churches.

Father Gretzer, who edited Sacco's works in 1613, on the margin opposite the account of the Waldenses' way of teaching, has this striking statement: "This is a true practice of the hereties of our age, particularly of the Anabaptists." There are a few of the Baptists of the present day, it is to be hoped, who would blush to own an alliance with either the old Waldensian preachers, or the heretical Baptists referred to by this father of the Catholic church, at least

in this part of their conduct; and, indeed, it would be well if all our missionaries and private Christians of the present day were as conversant with the Word of God as the Waldenses, even in that dark age appear, from the testimony of their enemies, to have been.”—Jones’ Church History, p. 352.

Limborch, Professor of Divinity in the University of Amsterdam, in 1670, who wrote a history of the Inquisition, in comparing the Waldenses with the Christians of his own times, says: “To speak honestly of what I think of all the modern sects of Christians, the Dutch Baptists more resemble both the Albigenses and Waldenses, but particularly the latter.”

We glory in the fact that Baptist churches were born of the divine purpose, and were fashioned by divine hands, and that neither death nor hell shall ever prevail against them. As long as the tide shall ebb and flow, as long as the rivers shall run to the sea, as long as the stars shall shine in their glory, so long shall Baptist churches continue on the earth.

The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper likewise implies the perpetuity of the churches. That the Lord’s Supper is a church ordinance, is a closed question, at least in this presence. Paul, in his letter to the Church at Corinth, says:

“For as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show forth the Lord’s death till He come.” I. Cor. 11:26. This passage teaches not only the design of the Supper, but emphatically teaches that this Supper shall continue to be observed till He come again.

Being a church ordinance, it would manifestly be impossible to observe it without a church. Therefore, in affirming the continued setting forth of the Supper, the Bible affirms the continuance of the church.

The doctrine, too, of the Final Preservation of the saints corroborates the doctrine of church perpetuity. If Christ has promised, and is able to keep one individual, is He not also able to keep a number of individuals, and if a number, why not a church, which is composed of individuals? If He preserves the parts, He must preserve the whole.

The most glorious page in human history, though stained with tears and blotted with blood, is the page that tells of our struggles throughout the centuries. As I have stood in the darkness of the catacombs of Rome, I have seen again my fathers worshipping God in their caverns, among the dead. As I have crossed the everlasting Alps and gazed at the ceaseless snow, I have thought of the blood of my people that has

stained it in other times; and, touched to tears, I have bowed and thanked God for such a spiritual ancestry, and for the Heaven-born heritage which they have bequeathed to the Baptists of this generation.

That we may prove worthy of it, is my plea and my prayer, for Christ's sake! Amen!

VII.

RESTRICTED COMMUNION.

"This do in remembrance of me." Luke 22:19.

The speaker is well aware that this subject has never been specially popular with the prejudiced, unreasonable, or unregenerate man. Nor should this be counted surprising, in view of the exclusive and uncompromising demands of the doctrine. The subject permits of only two possible views—the Scriptural and the sentimental. One of these adapts the ordinance to the Christian, the other adapts the Christian to the ordinance. As a matter of fact, all denominations believe in restricted communion, but only Baptists practice it according to the Scriptures.

It is true that restricted communion was not an issue in New Testament times, as all of the churches then in existence professed, at least, to be of the same faith and order. The question of communion, or comity, between Baptists and other denominations could not have arisen, as

no other denomination, save the Baptists, had yet been brought into being. The question, therefore, could arise only with the advent of denominations of different faith and polity.

It will be admitted that Baptists should have the right to state for themselves their position on this subject. There is no doubt that many have misunderstood our contention in this connection, for the simple reason that they accepted our position as stated by others, rather than by ourselves.

That there may be no doubt as to our position, let me state that every well-informed Scriptural Baptist in the universe must, and does, believe in restricted communion. It is foolish, however, to say that Baptists believe in "Close" Communion. It would be just as reasonable to say that Baptists believe in "close" salvation. Baptists are, on this and all other Scriptural teaching, strict constructionists. They believe the Bible says what it means, and means what it says, and that we have no right to add to or take from the words of the Book. They, therefore believe in a Scriptural participation in the Lord's Supper, regardless of whom it may include or exclude. It is the Lord's Table and not ours, and He alone has the right to establish the terms of partaking.

All will agree that the Supper is a restricted ordinance. The only question that can arise in this connection is as to the nature and number of the restrictions. Here, as elsewhere, our only recourse is to the Book—the law and testimony.

First, the observance of the Supper is *restricted to the churches*, as may be seen from the following passages: “For, first of all, when ye come together, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it.” “What! Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.” “And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not altogether unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.” I. Cor. 11:18, 22, 34. “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight.” Acts 20:7. “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” If, then, a church ordinance, it should be administered only by the churches.

Beyond question, then, there is at least one restriction on the celebration of this ordinance.

That the Lord's Supper is a church ordinance, is, or at least should be, a closed question among Baptists. If it is a Christian, and not a church, ordinance, then any Christian, anywhere, under any circumstances, may partake of the emblems, and call such an act a partaking of the Supper.

And if restricted to a church, then necessarily to the members of the church. And if to the members of a church, then admittedly to baptized believers, since by common consent only baptized believers are entitled to church membership. Practically all denominations agree that baptism is requisite to church membership, and that church membership is a prerequisite to the Supper. There is not an example in the Bible of one partaking of the Supper before baptism. That baptism comes before the Supper is proved—

1. By the Commission—teaching—faith—baptism—Supper.

2. By the significance of the ordinances—in baptism, we profess to have received life, while in the Supper we have that heavenly food that symbolizes the sustenance of life.

3. By apostolic precedent—in Acts 2:41, 42, the order is given—"Then they that received His word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand

souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." Here, the order is clearly—faith—baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

4. Universal Christian teaching. We know of no confession of faith that puts the Supper before baptism. Certainly, we have as much right to change the ordinance as to change the order of its observance. Who would dare to take the wine before the bread?

This phase of the subject then resolves itself into the question, "What is baptism?" Here, Baptists are agreed, and their convictions must determine their position and practice. If a Baptist Church believes that only an immersed believer should partake of the Supper, and yet invites one who has been sprinkled for baptism, or immersed for the remission of sins, it not only contradicts its faith, but expressly declares such substitutes to be Scriptural baptism. To do this, is to forfeit our faith and commit denominational suicide. An open grave is the inevitable logic of open communion for Baptists.

Restricted communion is the mildest possible protest by Baptists against substitutes for Scriptural baptism. Without doubt, the Baptist contention for restricted communion has pre-

served believer's baptism, and should our people surrender this contention, it will be only a question of time when believer's baptism will be lost to the earth.

It is gratifying to note in this connection that some of the most scholarly, who are opposed to our views on this question, recognize the logic and wisdom of our practice of restricted communion. Henry Ward Beecher said:

"A Pedobaptist who believes that baptism is a prerequisite to communion, has no right to censure Baptist churches for close communion. On this question, there is a great deal of pulling out of motives by people whose own vision is not clear."

Dr. Hibbard, the great Methodist preacher and writer, says:

"It is but just to remark that in one principle, the Baptist and Pedobaptist churches agree. They both agree in rejecting from communion at the table of the Lord and in denying the rights of church fellowship to all who have not been baptized. Valid baptism, they consider as essential to constitute visible church membership. This also we (the Methodists) hold. The only question, then, that here divides us is, What is essential to valid baptism?"

Dr. Wall, one of the most scholarly of all Episcopalian writers, says:

“No church ever gave the communion to persons before they were baptized. Among all the absurdities that were ever held, none ever maintained that any person should partake of the communion before they were baptized.”

Dr. Doddridge:

“It is certain that Christians in general have always been spoken of by the most ancient fathers as baptized persons. And it is also certain that, so far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity extends, no unbaptized person ever received the Lord’s Supper.”

Dr. Dwight says:

“It is an indispensable qualification for this ordinance that the candidate for the communion be a member of the visible Church of Christ in full standing. By this, I mean he should be a person of piety, that he should have made a public profession of religion, and that he should have been baptized.”

Justyn Martyr (A. D. 150) says:

“This food is called by us the Eucharist, of which it is not lawful for anyone to partake, but such as believe the things taught by us to be true, and have been baptized.”

Many other similar statements might be

given, but these will suffice to show that the candid scholarship of other denominations fully recognizes the consistency of our position. Their contention with us is not concerning our practice of restricted communion, but the fact that we will not acknowledge the scriptural authority of their churches, and their substitutes for scriptural baptism. They believe we are baptized, and therefore are willing to take the Supper with us; we do not believe they are baptized, and therefore cannot take the Supper with them. Since, then, there is, by common consent, at least one restriction, open communion is a Scriptural impossibility.

Another restriction laid down by our Lord, is that this ordinance cannot be observed *where there are factions in the church*. "For, first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and I partly believe it." "When ye come together, therefore, into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper." I. Cor. 11:18, 20.

This passage of Scripture clearly restricts the ordinance to a church without factions. A church with divisions, or factions, cannot, therefore, observe the Supper. The members of such a church may eat the bread and drink the wine, but this is not to eat the Lord's Supper.

It will hardly be denied by anyone that we are *restricted to the use of bread and wine* in the celebration of the Supper. The following verses are quite specific as to the use of bread and wine:

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it; and He gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And He took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins.”

It is hardly necessary to say that water and cake could not be substituted for bread and wine. Bread, and bread only, is designated to represent the body; and wine, and wine only, the blood of our Saviour. The Supper, therefore, is restricted as to symbols and the things symbolized.

Beyond question, the ordinance is *restricted in its design*. It was given for a definite and specific purpose, as will be seen from the following passage:

“This do in remembrance of me.” Luke 22: 19. Unfortunately, many well disposed people seem to have entirely missed the meaning of this sacred institution. Not a few appear to believe that the primary purpose of the Lord’s

Supper is to show our love for one another. It is quite common to hear some one say, "I wouldn't be a Baptist, because I couldn't commune with my mother, or my wife." Just as though it were possible to commune with one's wife or mother. Such seem to imagine that the Supper was specially instituted for the purpose of affording an opportunity for a husband to manifest his love to his wife or mother. It is significant in this regard, that the mother of our Saviour was in Jerusalem when He instituted the Supper, yet she was not present, and did not partake. This is equally true of a vast number of other followers then in Jerusalem. Certainly, there are many other ways in which Christians can more effectually show their love. Better display our love at our own expense rather than that of the Scriptures. The Corinthian church seemed to have cherished the current conception of the Supper, with the result that the ratio of their drunkenness probably equaled the ratio of their love.

The very fact that a man is thinking of his wife, mother, or anyone else, while partaking of the Supper is conclusive proof that he is disobeying the command, "This do in remembrance of me." This ordinance is a memorial, and a memorial of Christ only. As we eat the bread,

we should think of his broken body; and as we drink the wine, of the blood so freely shed for us. To think of another at such a time, is not to "discern the Lord's body," and he that does not do this, "eateth and drinketh condemnation to himself."

Another restriction, and one quite commonly overlooked, is the *restriction to doctrinal agreement*. The one loaf represents the one body, and though the loaf be broken, it is the sum and substance of the parts. Paul, in writing to the church at Rome, said:

"Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned, and turn away from them." Rom. 16: 17.

We deeply regret that there are such wide doctrinal differences among Christians, yet we cannot do away with these differences by denying them. It is not a very pleasant fact, and yet a fact, that a minister of any one of the so-called evangelical denominations would be excluded from his pulpit should he dare preach some of the cherished doctrines of the other denominations. For example, should I preach sprinkling for baptism, I would be rightly excluded by my church. Were a Presbyterian

preacher to declare from his pulpit that he believed in apostasy, the result can easily be imagined.

Whatever, then, would bar one from membership in our churches should also bar him from the table set by our churches. The Supper is a privilege of a church member, and if not entitled to membership, certainly not to the Supper. The greater includes the less.

The following syllogisms may serve to at least make clear the Baptist position:

1. Only New Testament churches have the right to set forth the Lord's Supper.

2. Pedobaptist and Campbellite churches are not New Testament churches.

3. Pedobaptist and Campbellite churches have no right to set forth the Lord's Supper.

1. Only those who have had the "one baptism" should partake of the Lord's Supper.

2. Pedobaptists and Campbellites have not had the "one baptism."

3. Pedobaptists and Campbellites should not partake of the Supper.

1. Only those in doctrinal agreement should sit together at the Lord's table.

2. Baptists and others are not in doctrinal agreement.

3. Baptists and others should not sit to-

gether at the Lord's table.

1. The Lord's Supper symbolizes the church fellowship of those who together partake of it.

2. Baptists are not in fellowship with Pedobaptists and Campbellites.

3. Baptists should not partake with Pedobaptists and Campbellites of the Lord's Supper.

The claim that the Baptist position on the Supper is a bar to church union seems to be used as a sedative for the accusing conscience of the unbaptized. If our position is scriptural, it should be held regardless of its consequences. The Lord can well take care of the logical results of His own commands. As a matter of fact, those who practice "open communion" maintain their distinctive doctrines while so doing, and Wesleyism and Presbyterianism and Cambellism are apparently as far apart as ever in spite of this sentimental practice.

If church union is to come, a consummation devoutly to be wished, under scriptural conditions, Baptists, of all people, offer the only reasonable platform—"one Lord, one faith, and one baptism." In addition they have baptism that is universally recognized as scriptural, and hence others have only to surrender a sentiment to accept it. Surely no one would demand the surrender of a principle upon the part of

another rather than himself surrender sentiment.

Concerning church union, in this regard, Dr. J. F. Love well says:

“It is here that the union of evangelical Christians ought to begin. They ought to unite on the fundamentals of Christian faith and Christ’s chosen means of preserving and preaching these. If they will agree upon the forms which Jesus selected and faithfully preach the gospel which these contain, they will, by magnetism of the Truth, surely draw together in real and valid bonds of Christian union, multiply their numbers many fold, and greatly increase their evangelical power against sin, rationalism, and Romish ecclesiasticism and sacerdotalism. While waiting for the denominations to do this, let individual Christians do their duty by observing and commending to others these ordinances which hold in symbolism the saving elements of the gospel and so obviously foretold victory over the grave and a blissful immortality for those who believe on God’s Son.”

VIII.

RESTRICTED BAPTISM.

I.—As to Design.

Of greater importance even than the mode is the purpose for which baptism is administered. Broadly speaking, baptism is always administered for one of two things—in obedience to the command of Christ, or for the remission of sins. Those who believe that baptism is vitally related to the forgiveness of sins, differ widely as to the efficacy and extent of this relation. Not a few profess to believe that baptism procures regeneration, while others claim that it completes it.

It is of infinite importance that we make no mistake concerning the place and province of baptism. If baptism has any atoning power, it must conflict with the sovereignty of the blood of Christ in salvation. To whatever extent then, baptism is essential to salvation, to that extent the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, does not cleanse from all sin. In other words, if baptism is, in anywise, essential to salvation, Christ did

not make a complete atonement. And since the atonement is our only hope of salvation, a mistake concerning it may cost the eternal welfare of the soul.

First of all, we assert that baptism is not for the forgiveness of sins, because the Bible teaches that we are *justified by faith*. The following passages of Scripture teach beyond the shadow of a doubt that we are justified by faith, and not baptism, or faith and baptism. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43. "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts 13:39. "And brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Acts 16:30, 31. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Romans 1:16. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Romans 3:25. "Even the righteousness of God which is

by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference." Romans 3:22. "Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith." Romans ~~3:30~~. "For what, saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." Romans 4:3-6. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart, man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Romans 10:10, 11. "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith." Gal 3:11. "And he said unto the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Luke 7:50.

Many other similar passages might be cited, but these should suffice. In many, many instances, we are taught that he that believeth

not, shall be lost, but nowhere are we taught that he who is baptized not shall be damned. Surely, if baptism is essential to salvation, somewhere in the Bible it would be stated that the unbaptized were lost. Faith is the one medium through which comes the blessing of forgiveness. It is the conduit which conveys the grace of redemption.

If justification is not by faith, but by faith and baptism, then Christ, during His entire ministry did not save a single soul, as He never baptized anyone. Thus it is, that the false and foolish doctrine of baptismal regeneration causes the curious contradiction that He who came to seek and save the lost, lived and died without personally perfecting the salvation of one soul.

According to this process of sanitary salvation, the princely Paul probably led not more than ten souls to the Saviour during his entire ministry. This clearly appears from the following verses: "I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I baptized in my own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the Cross of Christ should be made of none

effect." I. Cor. 1:14, 15, 16, 17.

Even worse, for if baptism is essential to salvation, Paul puts himself in the peculiar position of thanking God that he saved so few. More, Paul states specifically that he was not sent to baptize, but to preach the Gospel. This, according to the advocates of forgiveness, was equivalent to saying he was not sent to preach or practice a Gospel that saves.

Baptism cannot be essential to the forgiveness of sins, as baptism is admittedly a work, and *salvation is not by works, but of grace*. This is made plain from the following Scriptures: "And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise, grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more of grace: otherwise, work is no more work." Romans 11: 6. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Romans 3:27, 28. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Romans 9:11. "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me,

they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision." Gal. 2:9. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Eph. 2:8. If a man is saved by good works, all of his works would have to be good, and he would be damned for any bad work, or for the failure of doing the one good work of baptism. This makes the source of salvation in the creature, and not in Christ. It naturally follows, that all who believe in baptismal regeneration must believe in salvation by works. Works, or water, or waterworks, can never be necessary to the forgiveness of sins. We are created unto good works, but never by them; for by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." It would be entirely appropriate for those who make of baptism a saving sacrament, to reconstruct the old hymn to make it read as follows:

"Oh, to baptism how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be."

Quite naturally, those who believe that it

takes baptism to complete the plan of salvation, do not believe in the doctrine of Christian assurance. In all my ministry, I have never known of one, who believed in baptism for the remission of sins, who would say, "I know I am saved." Invariably, the only assurance that such a one claims, is the fact of his baptism, and not the testimony of the Spirit.

Not only is the doctrine of baptismal remission contrary to the entire teaching of Scripture, but directly opposed to the experience and conscience of millions of the redeemed. An overwhelming majority of the professed followers of Christ claim to be saved independent of their baptism. If the theory of baptism held by the disciples of Alexander Campbell be true, there are in the world today, only about one million saved people. If immersion is essential to salvation, even the Baptists will all be lost, as none of them have been immersed for the remission of sins. Thousands upon thousands of Pedobaptists will also be lost in spite of the fact they have given every evidence of regeneration. If we are to know them by their "fruits", many of them excel in every good word and work and give every evidence of the "fruits of the Spirit." That all these must be lost if the doctrine of immersion for the remission of sins is true, is pain-

fully self-evident. Among this number are many of the greatest and most consecrated of all time. That Alexander Campbell and Prof. J. W. McGarvey did teach the deadly doctrine, will appear elsewhere in this volume. Suffice it here to quote the last words ever written by Prof. McGarvey on the subject of Baptism:

“To set the mind of the Recorder at rest on this subject, if possible, I may say that Mr. Campbell taught, and I agree with him, not as the Recorder has it, that there is no promise of salvation without immersion, but as the ‘Advocate’ more correctly expresses it, ‘Salvation before baptism’. It would be still more accurate on account of the ambiguity of the word ‘salvation’ to say that there is no promise in the Gospel of Christ of remission of sins before baptism. That many may be finally saved who will not have been baptized, infants certainly, is the common belief of Mr. Campbell and his brethren, but that all who claim to have received the remission of sins before baptism are laboring under a delusion, we have affirmed and do affirm with all confidence.”

The contradictory character of the above deliverance will readily appear, to even the casual reader. Of course, those he refers to as “may be saved” without baptism, are evidently those

who lived before Pentecost. Yet, in spite of the contradictions, Prof. McGarvey asserts that those who believe they have received the remission of sins before baptism are *laboring under a delusion*. If this means anything, it means that no one's sins are remitted before baptism; and since it is true that no one can enter heaven without the remission of sins, it follows that no unbaptized person can enter heaven.

These words appeared in the *Christian Standard* of Cincinnati, some ninety days before his death, and clearly show that he had not receded from his former position on this question.

The plea that the unbaptized may be saved, but if so, not according to the Gospel, is hardly worthy of a reply. To even insinuate that anyone can be saved in any way contrary to the Gospel, is to impugn the veracity of Christ, and deny the credibility of the Scriptures.

A very pertinent question is that, If baptism is for the remission of sins, what was Christ baptized for? To say that He was baptized for the remission of sins is to say that He was a sinner. To the contrary, it is specifically stated why He was baptized—to fulfill all righteousness. There are only two passages of Scripture that are confidently relied upon by the advocates

of the doctrine of immersion for the remission of sins. These two passages are John 3:5 and Acts 2:38. Strangely enough, the disciples of Mr. Campbell are estopped by their own contention from quoting this verse to uphold their doctrine of immersion-remission. There is not one of their teachers or preachers in all the land who does not hold that the Kingdom was set up at Pentecost; yet these words were spoken sometime before Pentecost. As is well known, those who follow the teaching of Alexander Campbell all hold that the "dying thief" was saved before Pentecost, and that the plan of salvation effective in his case, was not valid after Pentecost. The same parity of reasoning would exclude John 3:5 from consideration in this connection. In spite of this, it is our purpose to show that this passage was not intended to teach baptism, but regeneration. After something of a study of this text, I am prepared to demonstrate that it has no reference whatever to the subject of baptism. Had Christ meant to teach that baptism was essential to regeneration, it is reasonable to assume that He would have used the word "baptism", not "water". The assumption that "water" here refers to baptism, is entirely gratuitous, and incapable of proof. If something other than the new birth was es-

sential to salvation, surely Christ would have stated that something, by its natural and usual name, as He did in other instances, when He referred to the subject of baptism. Nor is there anything in the context to demand, or suggest, such reference. Indeed, the context absolutely forbids a reference to baptism. In the verse following, which is explanatory and illustrative, we have the words, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Here, the human birth is, by common consent, clearly referred to. In addition, a sharp contrast is drawn between the two. If, then, "water" in the fifth verse refers to baptism, the phrase "which is born of flesh" in the sixth verse refers to baptism, which would be equal to saying, That which is born of baptism is baptism.

In the same chapter, and relating to the same subject, we are taught that salvation is by faith. "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:15, 16. If, then, water in verse 5, refers to baptism, Christ contradicts Himself in verses 15 and 16,

and that, too, in the same conversation. This is unthinkable.

What, then, is the meaning of this much-mooted text? There is one, and only one, interpretation that will make the context harmonize with the text, and save the teaching of Christ from being contradictory. Obviously, "water" refers to the birth according to the flesh, and "spirit" has reference to the spiritual birth. As every physician knows, water may very rightly be used to represent the human birth. It is not necessary to speak more plainly or fully here, to prove the truth of this statement.

To make the water represent the natural birth, and spirit, the spiritual birth is the only possible interpretation that accords with the context, and makes consistent the teaching of Christ.

Even if it could be shown that "water" in this text refers to baptism, it would not be conclusive as a proof text for baptismal regeneration. The laws of evidence compel us to respect the weight of evidence. For example, if there should be eight Supreme Court decisions affirming a certain point of law, and one denying it, the natural thing to do would be to follow the eight.

Strangely enough, those who claim that the

word water refers to baptism are unwilling to follow their interpretation to its logical conclusion. It is not likely that the most ardent advocate of the scheme of baptismal remission will affirm that water *per se* will regenerate the soul. Note too, that if "water" is to stand for baptism, and baptism for the new birth, then, according to the order in which these come, baptism effects the new birth prior to, and independent of, any spiritual work. Practically all Christians agree that the new birth is the result of the work of the Holy Spirit.

To make "water" equal baptism, then, we must be born of flesh, water and spirit, and hence three births. The very fact that such an interpretation demands three births is quite enough to demonstrate its fallacy.

Let us suppose that the conversation between Christ and Nicodemus had closed with the third verse, that is with the statement, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." From this statement could, or would, anyone ever have inferred that He had any reference to baptism? In fact, had not Nicodemus asked the further question, the reference to "water" would probably have never been made. If Christ had reference to baptism, and baptism was essential to forgiveness, surely He

would have so stated it when He mentioned what was necessary to enter the Kingdom of God. According to the baptismal regenerationists, it is exceedingly fortunate that Nicodemus prompted Christ to illustrate his former declaration.

The advocates of immersion for remission of sins, further base their contention on Acts 2:38 —“Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

It is well to bear in mind that the Revised Version rightly translates the Greek word “*eis*” “unto” instead of “for”. The word “for” and the attempt to make it mean “in order to,” has given seeming support to the theory of baptismal regeneration.

Dr. J. B. Moody, who has made a critical and scholarly study of this text gives the following:

“The next resort in an honest and thorough investigation is to its current use in the Scriptures. The New Testament Scriptures will permit ample scope, as this preposition occurs seventeen hundred times. The effort has been to maintain that *purpose* or *design* inheres in the preposition *eis*, rather than try to prove that the circumstances of Acts 2:38 require it. I am

prepared and shall proceed to disprove both. Mr. Anderson, who twice translated the New Testament for his people, translated Acts 2:38 in order to; and to make himself consistent, he translated the first occurrence of *eis* with baptize in the same way, viz.: Matt. 4:11: "I baptize you in order to repentance." In carefully following this translation through I find that he translates it 'in order to' about as often as he could and make a good English sentence. Twenty times, after a careful count, with a careful assistant, is the way it stands in the house of its friends; that is, 20 to 1,680. Mr. Wilson, in his 'Emphatic Diaglott,' has five to 1,695, and he sympathizes with the doctrine. Campbell, in 'Living Oracles,' has 4 to 1,696. The Bible Union has 2 to 1,698. Doddridge has 1 to 1,699. King James, though translating it 48 different ways, has no 'in order to'. Oxford Revision has none; Wesley has none; Sharpe has none; Sawyer has none. Making a summary of the ten translations, we have thirty-two against 16,968. But, as three of these believed the doctrine of baptismal remission, and were witnesses in their own cases, according to a common custom, we will refuse that part of their testimony that is in their favor, and take only those that were against themselves for that kind

of testimony is always reliable; the other, generally unreliable. This leaves 3 to 16,997 by the ten translations.

“The following will amply illustrate: ‘What shall I do that I might inherit eternal life?’ Purpose and design clearly stated, but not with the preposition *eis*. ‘Ye will not come to me *that* ye might have life.’ Purpose but no *eis*. ‘What must I do to be saved?’ Purpose but no *eis*. ‘Turn them from darkness to light, that they might receive forgiveness of sins.’ Purpose but no *eis*. ‘These things I say unto you that ye might be saved.’ Purpose expressed without *eis*. ‘Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water.’ Purpose but no *eis*. ‘Brought infants that he might touch them.’ ‘Put hands on Saul that he might receive sight.’ ‘Sent me that thou mightest receive sight.’ ‘Prayed that they might receive the Holy Spirit.’ ‘I am come that thou mightest have life, and that more abundantly.’ Peter could have expressed design in Acts 2:38 so there could have been no doubt or debate, but this he did not do. It can’t be proved that baptize *eis* ever expresses design. It is begging the question and forcing a false conclusion to contend that it is the province of *eis* to express de-

sign, for out of 1,700 occurrences it rarely does."

Admitting, for sake of argument, that "for" is a correct English translation, it is still impossible to torture the text into teaching baptism for the remission of sins. But the definition of the dictionaries should forever settle the question. The "Standard" defines the word "for" as follows: "Because of, by reason of; on account of; as, he was respected for his virtues." Webster defines it: "In the place of," "because of," "by reason of." Indeed, not one of the dictionaries gives "in order to," as either the primary or secondary meaning of the word "for."

Since then, neither "eis" in Greek, nor "for" in English mean "in order to," why should anyone dare to stake his soul, and the souls of others, upon an interpretation that is unwarranted in Greek or English?

A very common use of "for" is seen in the sentence—"He was placed in prison for stealing." Clearly, the thought is, he was placed in prison because he had stolen and not "in order to steal." A man is hung "for" murder, because he has already committed murder, and not that he may commit murder. Just so, a man is baptized on account of sins already com-

mitted, and not "in order to" remission, or that he may commit them.

It is absolutely certain that if those baptized on Pentecost were baptized in order to obtain remission of sins, they were the only ones of whom this was ever true. It is significant that nowhere in the New Testament is a seemingly similar statement made. Granted, that this view would seem to teach baptism for the remission of sins, should it be allowed to contradict the plain teaching of a multitude of other Scriptures? When Peter who spoke these words, laid down the terms of salvation to the household of Cornelius, he said: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43. Here he expressly predicates salvation on faith, and appeals even to the prophets to strengthen his statement. Did Peter contradict himself, or make a mistake when declaring the Gospel to the Gentile world? It should be remembered that he was preaching to those who knew nothing of the Gospel, and who would rely on what he said for the plan of salvation. Had Peter withheld something essential to salvation in preaching to Cornelius, he would have been guilty of an inexcusable crime. At all events, Cornelius had received the

Holy Spirit, and was accepted of the church before baptism. Peter stated that they had received the Holy Spirit as well as others, and that therefore no one should forbid them water. Did Peter, in Acts 2:38, contradict the teaching of Christ on the same subject? He certainly did, if he taught baptism in order to the remission of sins. Did he contradict Paul and all the other writers of the New Testament?

The fundamental, and perhaps fatal, mistake concerning baptism has come from mistaking the symbol for the thing symbolized. This, perchance, is natural to the unthinking mind or unregenerate heart. Baptism is declarative, and at best can only declare a work of grace that has already been wrought in the soul. The difference between Baptists and those who believe in baptismal remission may be expressed as follows: Baptists baptize a man, in obedience to a command because he is a child of God, while baptismal remissionists baptize a man to make him a child of God. In other words, baptism is a burial, and Baptists bury a man because he is dead (to sin), while the followers of Mr. Campbell bury a live man (live to sin) to kill him. It is usually deemed proper to bury those who are dead.

It is frequently said that since baptism is the

plain duty of the Christian, it makes no difference what place we assign it; or in what order it comes. In other words, the contention is, that as long as one believes and is baptized, the question when he is baptized, is altogether immaterial. However plausible this may seem at first sight, a little investigation will show that it conceals a dangerous, yes, a deadly, fallacy. The question goes to the very heart of the Atonement. The whole subject reduces itself to this question: "Does the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanse us from all sin?" In other words, did Christ make a complete atonement, and was His work a finished work? If Christ made a complete atonement, then baptism, which is a work, is not necessary to complete it. If our redemption was wrought out at Calvary, and the debt of sin paid, then a preacher and a pool are not necessary to pay the debt of sin. Whatever Christ may claim, by common consent, He claims the credit for our salvation. If baptism is essential to salvation, then the credit must be divided between Christ and the preacher. The man who trusts in the blood of Christ and the water of baptism, cannot be trusting in Christ for his salvation. The best that could be said of him, would be, that he is trusting in Christ

and baptism. According to the New Testament, it is not Christ plus or minus, but Christ alone and only. Hear ye Him, "I am the way," "I am the door," "He that cometh in any other way, is a thief and a robber." It follows, therefore, that anyone trusting in anything but the blood of Christ for salvation, is inevitably lost. Well may we sing:

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

In the great apocalyptic vision it was the blood-bought who walked the streets that are of pure gold. When John said, "Who are these?" back came the answer, "These are they which have come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Evidently, their robes had not been made white in the waters of baptism.

Even those who believe in baptismal remission are inconsistent in practicing it. For example, those who immerse for the remission of sins, also believe in apostasy. They believe that a Christian can revert to his former state of sin and occupy the same relation to God that he did

prior to his conversion. Yet, in spite of this, when he again professes Christ, they refuse to baptize again. In other words, baptism was essential to his salvation in one instance, but not in another. The legs of the lame are not equal.

We are absolutely sure that baptism will not change the sinful state, as we have baptized some who gave every evidence that their sins were not remitted. It is enheartening to know that the ministers who immerse for the remission of sins, do not claim that God calls them to preach such a doctrine. We accept at full face value, their contention that God did not call them to preach.

It is my deliberate opinion, based upon an observation of many years, that this soul-destroying doctrine has done more to obliterate the doctrine of regeneration and weaken the cause of experiential religion than possibly all other heresies. Apparently, only a small number of those who have once embraced this doctrine, ever come to a saving knowledge of the truth. Would to God, they might, one and all, turn unto the Lord, who will have mercy upon them, and unto our God who will abundantly pardon. In that day, for which all days are

made, and to which we are all hastening, how infinitely little will seem all else, compared with Christ, the Lamb of God for sinners slain. When they shall come up from the East and the West, and from the North and the South, and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God, then shall they ascribe honor and glory, not to the preacher, or the waters of baptism, but to Him who redeemed us with His own precious blood--

“Jesus paid it all;
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.”

IX.

THE CHURCH-BRANCH THEORY.

(No text in the Bible.)

At divers times, various and sundry subjects have proven divisive in Baptist thought and practice. Some of these differences have been temperamental, others fundamental, and, at one time or another, have engendered unpleasantness, and sometimes estrangement. At times, these questions of disagreement have been accentuated into distinct schools of thought and practice.

The question naturally arises, Have these differences been worth the contention they have cost? My answer would be "Yes," and "No". Occasionally, there has been bitter debate, where the difference has been that of tweedledum and tweedledee. Certainly, causes of alienations of this character are to be deeply deplored and studiously avoided. Unfortunately, however, a few points of disagreement have

been far-reaching, and fraught with real danger to our faith. Indeed, had some of the liberalizing tendencies, which at times have manifested themselves, gained the ascendancy, our denominational perpetuity would have been imperiled, if not entirely destroyed.

After something of a study of Baptist history and present-day doctrinal tendencies, I am thoroughly convinced that the Church-branch theory has been, and is, the one common cause of practically all the disturbances among Baptists. A little thought on this subject will, I believe, convince anyone that this diagnosis of our differences is correct. The trouble with many, in this connection, has been that they regarded the Church-branch theory as only a theory. When considered only as theory, for academic purposes, it may be esteemed as practically harmless. As a matter of fact, this "theory" has long since become a basis of faith and practice. It is unquestionably true that faith in this theory will inevitably discount a scriptural church and logically determine one's ecclesiastical affinities and denominational conduct.

The Scripture that is commonly relied upon to teach the Church-branch theory, is that relating to the vine and the branches. As is well

known to all who have given any thought whatever to the question, Christ is the Vine, and His disciples, the branches, there is no reference whatever to the churches. A mere reading of the fifteenth chapter of John is well calculated to convince anyone of this fact. In verse 3 we find the words, "Ye are clean". The "ye" here, beyond all question, referring to His disciples, to whom His words were addressed. In verse 6 of the same chapter, Christ says, "If any *man* abide not in me," etc., not any church.

Granted, that the various and varying denominations are, one and all, true churches of Christ, no living logician can justify the Scriptural statement of one Lord, one faith and one baptism. If Christ be the Vine, and the many denominations the branches, our contention for close baptism and close communion are both false and futile. No man can consistently believe in the Church-branch theory and restricted baptism and communion. The branches of a vine or tree are identical in substance and kind, and hence, if the different denominations are branches of the same vine, they have the same divine source, and are, therefore, of equal merit. If Christ is the vine, and all the denominations branches, they are all equally New Testament churches, with all the rights and privileges,

duties and obligations pertaining to a church of Christ. This being true, one denomination is as good as another, and the choice of a church is solely one of taste and sentiment. It would follow that Baptist churches should accept members on letters from all the "branches". Any Baptist who believes in the Church-branch theory, is logically forced to accept a sprinkled member of one of the "branches". All that any Baptist church can claim is that it is a New Testament Church, and when we admit that other denominations are New Testament churches, then we must admit their baptism and their right to the Supper.

The present craze for union meetings of well-nigh every kind and character is the natural result of the Church-branch theory. The man who favors this theory, must, of necessity, favor union meetings. In fact, why should we favor any other kind? A little investigation will, we believe, show that all advocates of union meetings are believers in this fanciful theory. Their conclusion is incontrovertible, the error is with their premises.

The present demand for church union is the natural fruit of the Church-branch delusion. Obviously, no one can hold this theory and consistently oppose a church union by a process of

compromise and cancellation. If the different doctrines are of equal merit, and they must be if this destructive theory is true, then why allow any one of them to stand in the way of church union? If sprinkling equals immersion, and immersion for the forgiveness of sins equals baptism, then Baptists are nothing less than criminal in contending for the immersion of believers, at the cost of church union. The whole truth is, the consistent carrying out of the Church-branch theory means the disappearance of every Baptist Church in Christendom. Had the many martyrs, who faced the flames for their faith, held to this dilittant doctrine, they might have died in ignominious old age.

It will be generally conceded that Christ instituted a church, and that the church he instituted was to serve as a model and pattern for all churches of Christ. It is also admitted that the churches established in New Testament times were of the same faith and order. Granted, then, that the church instituted by Christ and those founded by the Apostles had the same faith and polity—one Lord, one faith and one baptism—the burden of proof must rest upon those who attempt to prove that churches radically differing from these churches are churches of Christ. More: the man who starts a church and claims

that it is a Christian church, must prove that Christ has expressly authorized him to institute a church; and, if called upon, must be able, by miracles and other unfailing signs to demonstrate the divinity of his mission.

Certainly, two distinct and divergent bodies, differing in faith and practice, can not claim to be equal to the same thing, or to each other. For example, it is hardly conceivable that Christ would organize one church to teach immersion, and another to teach sprinkling; one to establish an ordinance, and another to destroy that ordinance. It is positively unthinkable that Christ would commission one church to affirm a given proposition, and another to deny the same proposition, and at the same time tell us that a house divided against itself can not stand. Such a course of conduct would make Christ a contradiction and his work automatically and axiomatically self-destructive. Imagine, if you can, Christ commanding the pastor of the church at Jerusalem to preach immersion, and the pastor of the Corinthian church to preach pouring: the brethren at Ephesus to believe in apostasy and the disciples at Antioch in the security of the believers! Such a theory defies thought, and the Bible hurls it from the heart and reason dashes it from the brain. If it is true that we

are saved by grace, it cannot be true that we are saved by works. If a congregational form of government is scriptural, a different form of government is unscriptural. If the doctrine of a final preservation of the saints is true, apostasy is untrue. If only a believer should be baptized, it should not be necessary to state that an unbeliever should not be baptized. No amount of sweet sounding sentiment or fraternal foolishness can make a statement true and false at one and the same time.

The old illustration of the family and the churches has probably done more than any argument to render plausible the Church-branch theory. The time-worn statement that the children of a family may have different physical and mental characteristics, even as the different denominations, and yet be the children of the same parents, may look reasonable at first sight. A little examination of this sentimental shadow will readily reveal its fallacy. It is true that children may differ in many respects, and yet be children of the same father and mother. It must be admitted, however, that if a typical Chinaman or Indian should be born in an Anglo-Saxon home, such an event would be calculated to arouse some suspicion. Yet, the difference between an Anglo-Saxon and a Chinaman is not

in sum and substance as great as the doctrinal differences of the various denominations. The differences between the denominations are not incidental or immaterial, but essential and fundamental. For example, the plan of salvation is the very foundation of the entire Christian system. Yet, if the plan of salvation by works, or water, as taught by some of the denominations, will save a man, the plan of salvation by grace, as taught by Baptists, will damn him. Certainly, then, the denominational differences are so radical that they cannot be said to have been built on the same model, or to be the same in sum and substance. In view of these facts, it would appear that the family illustration is hardly in good taste, or according to common sense.

It can be stated, without the least fear of successful contradiction, that there is not a single passage in the New Testament that can possibly be tortured into teaching the Church-branch theory. Those who invented this sentimental idea were, no doubt, actuated by the best of motives, but it finds no support in reason or Scripture. And while we all glory in brotherly love, we should not exalt this love at the expense of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us be loyal to Christ, even, if needs be, at the expense of

friends or family.

All too long have we combated particular heresies growing out of this pernicious theory. We may as well go to the fruitful source of these hurtful heresies. The fact is, many are not willing to face the logic of the Baptist position. Whether we like it or not, our position forces us to the conclusion that Baptist churches are the only New Testament churches. Not only must we candidly declare this as our position, but more, we must contend for it. Either this, or else cease all contention, and surrender our denominational life. Baptist churches have reached the hour when it is conviction and contention, or the cemetery.

But, some one may say, "What boots it, whether one believes, or disbelieves, the Church-branch theory?" Our answer would be, Much in every way. The entire realm of one's theological thinking will be dominated by his view of the Church-branch theory. Indeed, the question whether the Church is a human or a divine institution must be determined by the falsity or truth of the Church-branch contention.

As we see it, the logical result of the teaching that all denominations are equally churches of Christ, is the ultimate extinction of Baptist churches. What, forsooth, is the necessity or

sense of maintaining our peculiar position, or separate existence, if other denominations are of equal merit with our own? Why perpetuate a divisive organization, if other denominations are divinely commissioned to do our work?

The movement for church federation, at home and abroad, grows out of our conception of the relative value of the churches. Nor could we censure those who hold this theory, should they prove willing to sacrifice some distinctive doctrine for the sake of church amalgamation. Granted, the premise that all churches (so-called) are churches of Christ, denominational death is the inevitable conclusion. If we believed in the one, we would most certainly practice the other.

I have not attempted to ascertain the origin of this delectable doctrine, but suffice it to say that it saves considerable trouble and is a very present help in union meetings and a valuable aid to popularity.

X.

SALVATION AND ITS SUBSTITUTES

**"For neither is circumcision anything,
nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."—
Galatians 6:15.**

The only possible way to become a new creature is by generation, or regeneration. The words of Christ, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God," are as true today as the day they were uttered by the Master; yet, in spite of this clear teaching of Scripture, there is a wide-spread disposition to underestimate or altogether ignore the necessity of the new birth. Indeed, I am constrained to believe that, were it not for Baptist teaching, this doctrine would cease to be emphasized as the one essential to salvation.

As might be expected, those who are disposed to do away with the new birth, are quite anxious to offer a substitute. Some of these are more or less plausible, and all of them exceedingly sinful.

One of the current substitutes for regeneration is education. An emphatic word needs to be spoken in this connection, even at the risk of being counted unfriendly to the great cause of education. The speaker glories in a revival of learning, and in the intensive and extensive interest in educational affairs. The ever-increasing interest in our schools and colleges betoken a better day and a greater achievement. Would that we, one and all, might give ourselves more unreservedly to the commanding cause of education.

And while it would be difficult to over-emphasize the worth of education in its place, as a substitute for salvation, it becomes a consuming curse. It is now boldly proclaimed that a child with proper environment and education does not need regeneration. If this be true, then the blood of Christ is not essential to salvation; hence His death would be the cardinal mistake of the centuries. If one man can be saved without the blood of Christ, then why not every man; then why the death of Christ? Far better ignorance with regeneration, than education without it. I believe in culture, provided, of course, there is something to cultivate. With the "heart," and not with the head, man believeth unto righteousness. Only the new creature

can be educated in the Christian graces. There must be birth before there is growth, and divine dynamics before divine development. A college degree may be a just acknowledgment of intellectual achievement, and an A.B. may be rightly coveted; but a B.A.—born again—is indispensable in the school of Christ. The school, then, can never displace Calvary, or all the books in Christendom, The Book of Christendom.

Character is another current substitute for the Cross. More and more, the pulpits of our land are becoming contaminated by this deadly teaching. Naturally, the leaders in this school of thought are the Unitarians. As they have no Christ, they seek to make character take the place of Christ. And while they profess to believe they obtain salvation by character, they are illogical in refusing to believe that damnation, according to their belief, should come from lack of character. Unfortunately, professed Unitarians are not the only ones who believe in salvation by character. The greater the pity, all Unitarians are not in their own organizations.

Multitudes, in various denominations, believe that good deeds constitute character, and that character is the only essential to salvation. All such expect to be saved by the deeds of the

law, though the New Testament teaches that no one is saved by the deeds of the law. They still believe that the man who "doeth these things shall live by them". Just here, it may be well to say that a man is neither saved nor damned by what he does. The man is not damned because he is a murderer, but because he did not trust Christ. A man is not a thief because he steals, but steals because he is a thief. The feet of the prodigal followed his heart into the far country. The one cause of condemnation is expressed in the verse, "They are already condemned, because they have not believed in the only begotten Son of God".

It is what Christ has done for us, and not what we, or others, can do, that saves us. There are only two classes that seek Christ. One of these says, "Jesus paid it all," while the other says, "Christ paid a part of it". One of these will be saved, the other lost. If Christ paid the debt of my sin, I do not owe it. God will not require a debt to be twice paid. Not by the works of the law, but "by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God".

Still another substitute for the new birth is that of ecclesiastical salvation. Uncounted millions, in Catholic and Protestant denominations,

are looking to the church for salvation. They have rested their hope of salvation in the church instead of in Christ. They are conscious of the fact that they have never had a "change of heart," and hence cling to the church as their only hope. In reply to the question, "Are you a Christian?" we are quite frequently told, "I am a member of the church". Alas! we have fallen upon times when church membership is not even *prima facie* evidence of regeneration. To quit your meanness and join the church is deemed sufficient for salvation.

It is a fact, that all the churches, genuine or counterfeit, of all the ages, have never saved a single soul. A church may point to the Redeemer, but it cannot redeem; it may lift up the Saviour, but it cannot save.

Alas! how many are trusting in the ordinances of the churches for their eternal welfare. It is probably safe to say that fully one-half of the professed Christians of the world believe that baptism, is in some real sense, essential to salvation. Many believe it takes the place of circumcision, notwithstanding the words of our text. Beyond question, the belief in the doctrine of baptismal regeneration is responsible for infant baptism. As a matter of fact, the confessions of faith of all denominations that practice

infant baptism teach that baptism is, in greater or less degree, essential to salvation. The moment the idea of baptismal regeneration passes, with it will forever pass the practice of infant baptism. It is quite encouraging, in this connection, to be able to state with mathematical certainty, that the number of infant baptisms is constantly decreasing, and that this unscriptural rite is meeting with disfavor, even in the house of its friends. In the years to come, followers of Christ will wonder why this ancient relic of baptismal regeneration was ever administered in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Unfortunately, the belief in baptismal regeneration is not confined to those who practice infant baptism. The disciples of Alexander Campbell, now numbering more than a million, are thoroughly committed to this deadly doctrine. The following from the pen of Alexander Campbell, the founder of the faith, and Prof. J. W. McGarvey, the late President of the Bible College of Transylvania University, and at the time of his death, the ablest expounder of this system, will clearly demonstrate our contention:

"In my debate with Mr. Maccalla in Kentucky, 1823, on this topic, I contended that it

was a divine institution designed for putting the legitimate subject of it in actual possession of the remission of his sins—That to every believing subject it did formally, and, in fact, convey to him the forgiveness of sins. It was with much hesitation I presented this view of the subject at that time, because of its perfect novelty. I was then assured of its truth, and, I think, presented sufficient evidence of its certainty. But having thought still more closely upon the subject, and having been necessarily called to consider it more fully as an essential part of the Christian religion, I am still better prepared to develop its import, and to establish its utility and value in the Christian religion.” —The Christian Baptist, page 401.

“And in the third place, I must shew that it is as plainly affirmed in the New Testament that God forgives men’s sins in the act of immersion, as that he will raise the dead at the voice of the archangel, or as that Jesus Christ will come again to judge the world.”

I. John 2:12: “I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake.” This allusion few consider correctly; but, in my judgment, it is just equivalent to saying, I have written you, exhorting you little children; because you have been immersed

into the name of the Lord Jesus.”

“In the third place, I proceed to shew that we have the most explicit proof that God forgives sin for the name’s sake of his Son or when the name of Jesus Christ is named upon us in immersion;—that in, and by, the act of immersion, so soon as our bodies are put under water, at that very instant our former, or “old sins” are all washed away, provided only that we are true believers.”

“I say it is quite sufficient to shew that the forgiveness of sins and Christian immersion were, in their first proclamation by the holy apostles inseparably connected together. Peter, to whom was committed the keys, opened the kingdom of heaven in this manner, and made repentance, or reformation, and immersion, equally necessary to forgiveness.”

“I am bold, therefore, to affirm, that every one of them who, in the belief of what the apostle spoke, was immersed, did, in the very instant in which he was put under the water, receive the forgiveness of his sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. If so, then, who will not concur with me in saying that Christian immersion is the Gospel in water.”—The Christian Baptist, pp. 416 and 417.

“Now when a man is in Christ, his sins are

certainly forgiven, and before he is in Christ, they are certainly not forgiven. They are forgiven in passing into Christ, and a part of the process by which one passes into Christ is the act of baptism; and it follows that, as he is not in Christ until he is baptized, until he is baptized he is not forgiven. . . The man who has not yet entered into the relation expressed by the word, 'into the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit', is yet in an unforgiven state, whatever may be his belief and his emotions; and this relation is established as soon as all of his sins are forgiven; but he enters into this relation in the act of baptism, he is baptized into it, and it follows that his sins are forgiven in connection with his baptism."—Commentary on Acts.—McGarvey. Page 250.

"Now before a man is in the Kingdom of God, his sins are forgiven; and when his sins are forgiven, he is no longer an alien, but a citizen of that kingdom. By whatever process, then, he enters into that kingdom, by that or in that he obtains the remission of sins; but that process is the birth of water and the Spirit, of neither alone, but of both; and therefore he obtains forgiveness not before, but when, he is baptized."

"These evidences establish, as clearly as any

fact can be established, an immediate connection between baptism and remission of sins, and they show with equal clearness that the divine act of forgiving sins takes place when the sinner, in whose heart the Holy Spirit has wrought faith and repentance, is baptized into Christ."—Commentary of Acts. J. W. McGarvey. Pages 254, 255.

In the entire history of Christendom, probably no doctrine has been responsible for the loss of a greater number of men and women than this soul-destroying doctrine. If the New Testament clearly teaches anything, it teaches that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin, and that the atonement was completed with the crucifixion of Christ at Calvary. Obviously, the man who believes that baptism is in anywise essential to salvation, does not believe that the blood of Christ, only, pays the debt of sin. To the contrary, he believes that it takes man and water, to make effectual the blood of Christ for the remission of sins. Hence it cannot be said that such a man is trusting in Christ as his hope of salvation. The very best that could be said is, that he is trusting in Christ plus baptism. According to this, Christ did not "finish" His work of redemption, and we are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ and the sin-effacing

act of baptism. Such a faith vitiates the power of the atonement, and renders of no effect the blood of Christ.

Whatever else we may believe, never let us cease to believe that the blood of Christ is the one and only remedy for sin.

The new birth is a new creation, and not a reformation. There is nothing more tragic and pitiful than the vain efforts at reformation without regeneration. Reformation may whitewash a man, but he can be washed white only in the blood of the Lamb. A disordered watch cannot be regulated by its hands, but in its innermost parts. It is the heart, not the hands, that must be changed by the Cross of Christ. Only the Christ can give life to those dead in trespasses and sins.

A man may possess all the intellectual and political qualifications necessary to the presidency of the United States, but he can never occupy the White House unless he is born an American citizen. Senator Beck, of Kentucky, might have made an admirable President, but it would have been necessary to change the constitution before he would have been eligible to

this high office. And just so, it will be necessary to change the New Testament before anyone can be saved who has not been born in the Heavenly Kingdom. "Ye must be born again," is the unchanging mandate of the changeless Christ. Nations may rise and fall; civilizations may come and go, but the mandate of the Almighty remains, and the word of the Lord endureth forever.

New views of life will come to him who has seen Jesus; and the world can never be the same to the man who is dead to sin and alive in Christ Jesus. As a new creature, in Christ, he realizes the relative value of things; the comparative worth of the here and the hereafter. Whatever his lot here, he rests serenely in the Crucified, knowing that when his day's work is done, he will spend the eternal years with God. He no longer looks to this world for his reward, but to that better land of light and love and song. The old things have passed away, and all things have become new!

Not only will his views of life be changed, but he will be moved by different motives to different deeds. He will feel that he is created unto good works, and it will be his joy to do them. Instead of being conformed to the world, he will be transformed by divine grace. The

things he once loved, he now hates, and he no longer glories in the flesh, but in the Cross of Christ. He feels that the form and fashion of this world shall pass away, and hence he seeks a city whose builder and maker is God. He rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory, that he is the child of the King, for he has been born into the household of heaven, and neither death nor hell shall rob him of his heritage.

XI.

CHURCH UNION.

"And he put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all"—Eph. 1:22, 23.

Much has been said and written during the last decade concerning church union. More, perhaps, than any other, has this subject claimed the attention of a number of the denominations. In fact, from all that has been said, one would imagine that this delusive scheme would soon be realized.

That church union, under certain conditions, is a consummation to be coveted, is not a debatable question, and, therefore, will not be considered in this connection.

First of all, it will be well to note what should be assumed by the advocates of church union. The very idea of an amalgamation of the churches assumes the equality of the denominations that are to unite. This assumption, as we shall see, does violence to both truth and facts.

In other words, the assumption is unconditionally untrue. Things that differ from each other cannot equal the same thing or each other. The man who makes a union of the churches the chief consideration, should be willing to give and take in matters of doctrine. Unless he be willing to do this, then he is misleading in his statement in this behalf. Unless he is willing to bring about a coalition by compromise and cancellation, he should not, without specific stipulations, advocate a union of the denominations.

It may not be amiss to propound just here, a pertinent, though painful, question: Are the leaders in the movement for ecclesiastical union really honest in their contention? It must be said that thus far they have given no real evidence of their sincerity. No tentative program has been proposed, no basis of union suggested. Not one of these coalition schemers has stated what particular doctrine he is willing to surrender to make possible the proposed denominational get-together. Surely, it is passing strange that after so vast an amount of confederated foolishness, no one has dared to state what sacrifices he is willing to make in this behalf. The absence of such a declaration at least raises the presumption that there is a sad lack of candor in their contention.

Imagine, if you can, a Presbyterian being willing to surrender the doctrine of God's sovereignty; or a Methodist, infant baptism; or a disciple of Alexander Campbell, baptismal remission; or an Episcopalian, the Historic Episcopate; or a Baptist, salvation by grace and believer's baptism. It will require a more vivid imagination than is possessed even by the union-tarian, to conceive of such a contingency. It may be replied, that no one of the denominations would be required to give up any of the essentials of its faith. The question is, What do the various denominations consider as essentials of their faith? It is hardly reasonable to suppose that a denomination would have something in its creed that it deems unessential. Such a presumption carries with it the imputation of a woeful want of common sense. If any denomination holds anything that is not taught in the Bible, such tenet should be speedily surrendered without any reference to church union. If, to the contrary, a church holds only true doctrines, it would be a traitor to truth to surrender any one of them. The truth is a sacred trust that we have no right to betray for any cause or under any circumstances. A proposal to compromise one's faith is a reflection on his intelligence or his morals.

Even should the various denominations come together, they could not constitute a unit, or union. Each would still hold his distinct and different doctrines. In other words, there would be only a nominal union, which, in its last analysis, is no union. Our Campbellite friends have earnestly contended for organic union on a name, and are themselves divided on the use of the church organ, thus defeating "organic" union. If, then, the union is to be only in name, which it must be, unless there is a surrender of faith, manifestly such a union would symbolize a falsehood. Such a curious and unholy combination would be a mere make-believe and unworthy of a Christian man or woman.

The current craze for ecclesiastical combination rests primarily upon sentiment. Such a sentiment is both natural and pleasing, and withal well calculated to catch the unwary. The average man would rather agree than disagree with his brother, especially in a cause in which they are mutually interested. Here, as elsewhere, the line of least resistance presents a powerful plea, and one not easily withstood. And this provokes the declaration that sentiment should never become a principle of action. The attempt to make sentiment take the place of conscience and Christ has resulted in confusion

worse confounded. Unholy spiritual affinities are, perhaps, worse than social affinities. Sometimes the one may lead to the other, as was the case with Samson and David.

Entangling and unholy alliances, or rather mesalliances, have probably done more than all else to destroy Baptist stamina and retard Baptist progress. Baptists are essentially strict constructionists, and their denominational doings should correspond with their faith. If I am unwilling to permit infant baptism in person, why should I bid it Godspeed by proxy. A doctrine or practice is true or false, right or wrong, Scriptural or unscriptural, and we should govern ourselves accordingly.

Another motive, and, we regret to say, an unworthy one, that actuates the contenders for church union, is to out-general others engaged in the same gracious game. In this regard, spiritual diplomacy has surpassed itself during the last decade. Desiring to make a fair show in the flesh, and likewise in the spirit, the leaders in this line have, to put it mildly, reached the limit. With the pleasing pretense that there is "no difference," Baptists are affectionately requested to surrender the doctrine of God's sovereignty, salvation by grace and believer's baptism. This presumption, upon the part of some,

seems to be that the fundamental doctrines of the Scriptures are exchangeable and interchangeable quantities, and may be held or relinquished at pleasure. We did not so receive them; neither can we so impart them.

Still another, and perhaps the most important class, base their advocacy for church union upon the teaching of the Lord's prayer for unity. A very little thought should readily convince anyone that there is utterly nothing in this prayer that has even the remotest reference to the question of church union. Beyond question, the prayer is for unity, but not union. At the time this prayer was made, the various denominations with their multitude of conflicting doctrines were not in existence. Somehow, it seems impossible for the advocates of church union to differentiate between unity and union. A scant knowledge of the meaning of words should serve to make clear the radical difference in their meaning.

The prayer made by the Saviour, and which is the great proof text relied on by the union-tarians, is found in John 17:21, and is as follows:

“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be

one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Concerning this text, Meyers, who, as a commentator, has no superior, says: "In his prayer for the disciples, for their preservation and sanctification (verse 11-15) Jesus now includes all who shall believe on him. The purposes for which he also includes these: that all (all my believing ones and others) may be one (ethically in likeness of disposition, of love, of endeavor, etc.)"

Olshausen gives the following interpretation of the passage: "The Redeemer now adds to the two petitions, for the preservation and sanctification of his own, the final request for the glorification of those preserved and sanctified. In presenting this last prayer, Christ immediately extends his view. . . . In reference to this glorification, the Saviour first enters more largely into the subject, briefly touched upon verse 11, viz.: the unity of believers. This unity of believers in love is intended to be a witness to the world for the divine mission of Christ. . . . All attempts to bring it about in any other way, by force, instruction, or persuasion, have to this day proved abortive, and they always will be so in time to come."

All other commentaries that I have consulted

give about the same meaning to this passage. Indeed, I do not know of a single one that attempts to make the passage mean, or teach, in any way church union. It will be seen, therefore, that the very text upon which the union-tarians have based their plea in no way supports their theory. It would seem that honest and intelligent men would cease to quote this passage to bolster up their plea.

Obviously, before there can ever be church union, there must be doctrinal agreement, at least on the fundamentals. This can come only from a study of the Scriptures and a willingness to make the New Testament the only rule of faith and practice. Admittedly, the Lord has made known His will concerning us, and just as surely His will may be known to the honest seeker after truth. For example, it is impossible to express in human speech anything clearer than the statement that there is "one Lord, one faith and one baptism." According to the consensus of the scholarship of the world, immersion is the original mode of baptism, as commanded by Christ and practiced by the Apostles. Now, then, why should not all Christians who are honest in their plea for church union, be willing to unite, at least on believer's baptism? Until a willingness to do this is mani-

festated by those who have perverted the ordinance, it is the climax of folly to plead for union. As it appears to the speaker, until this much is conceded, Baptists cannot conscientiously consider the question in any way.

It is absolutely true that Baptists are in a position to offer the most practical and only Scriptural basis for church union. They have a baptism that all other denominations acknowledge as Scriptural, and hence other denominations have only to surrender a sentiment to accept it, while to accept theirs, Baptists would have to surrender a principle. All believers will admit that believer's baptism, as practiced by Baptists, is valid, and all that remains is for others to show their faith by their works. Now, then, if our uniontarian friends are not playing to the galleries, they have the opportunity of a life time to show their sincerity, by making believer's baptism the first plank in the platform of church union.

While waiting for the world to come to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, let Baptists continue to contend for the truth once for all delivered to the saints. In our contention, we are cheered and sustained by the promise that the "gates of Hades" shall not prevail against the churches of Christ. In the

past, prison, fire and sword have been used to blot out the true churches of Christ. These having failed, the seductive song of the siren has been invoked to win us from our steadfastness, and, sad to say, with more success than the program of imprisonment and death.

Oh, for a mighty revival of church love. God help us to sing and live the wise words of the old song—

"I love Thy Kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode,
The Church our blessed Redeemer saved
With His own precious blood."

XII.

ELECTION.

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

"Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Rom. 8:29, 30.

This great and precious doctrine, though sadly neglected in the preaching of most ministers, is the first, final and only hope of salvation. The very fact that this doctrine is not popular, has caused many to remain silent concerning it.

Personally, I have never felt that I had any right to neglect a doctrine because, forsooth, it would not be graciously received. Christ and His doctrine were alike rejected, and it is hardly to be expected that the servant should receive better treatment than his Master. If we fail to preach the truth, how shall we escape the pen-

alty prescribed? "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

The question then is not, Is the doctrine popular, but, is it true? If false, it should be eliminated from every confession of faith; if true, as occasion demands, it should be preached from every pulpit in Christendom. We dare not say that it is dangerous to teach any doctrine that is taught in God's Word.

It is probable that this doctrine has been somewhat less acceptable, because it is commonly coupled with the name of "Calvin". This has caused many to ascribe it to a human origin, and given to it a denominational setting, that has probably prejudiced not a few against it. While it is true that John Calvin demonstrated and magnified the doctrine of God's sovereignty with unsurpassed perspicuity and power, yet the truth of election was not originated by, or dependent upon, him, or any other man. Baptists were preaching the elective purposes of God through riches of grace for cen-

turies before Calvin was born. If any human name should be chosen to designate this doctrine, it would be more appropriate to refer to it as "Paulism" rather than "Calvinism".

A clear statement of the doctrine should go far towards its acceptance. It does not teach that God fore-ordains or predestines anyone to perdition. To the contrary, God takes no delight in the death of the wicked, and would that all men might come unto Him and live. It is a fact that the doctrine of election never turned anyone away from God, who wished to serve Him. None of the lost can ever reproach God with being unjust, though many will glorify Him for His great and undeserved mercy. Those who are lost will be the first to say "Amen" to their own condemnation.

It does not mean that the Atonement was not sufficient for the salvation of every sinner under the sun. It is a fact, however, that it is efficient only to those who trust Christ for their salvation. It is our duty to preach the Gospel to every creature, and everyone who believes the Gospel, may be assured that he is one of the elect. I may say further, that I have never known a man who really desired to be saved who was not saved, and certainly anyone who does not desire to be saved, deserves to be lost.

This doctrine does teach, that in creation, redemption and preservation, God has a purpose and a plan, and that His purpose and plan will prevail. Certainly, someone must be sovereign, and in the nature of the case, it must be God, man or the devil. Surely, there is a Sovereign, and just as surely that Sovereign is the God of all truth and grace. God is not a non-resident of this world, and there is

"A Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

By common consent, omniscience is one of the attributes of God. This being true, God must have foreknown all that would come to pass. God cannot foreknow anything that is not a fact, and if He foreknows an event, that event must come to pass. A contrary reasoning would be equivalent to charging God with a lack of knowledge, or a mistake, either of which is unthinkable. Just here, the frank admission is made that from an earthly angle of vision, there are apparent difficulties attending this doctrine. Yet the difficulties attending the doctrine of God's sovereignty are infinitely less than those attending the doctrine of the sovereignty of man.

This doctrine means much more than fore-

knowledge. It means that God has predestinated, chosen, called and justified a certain number unto eternal life. This, too, not on account of any merit, but according to His Sovereign will and pleasure. He has not chosen us because we were holy, but we are elected that we might become holy. This is clearly taught in the following verse: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Titus 3:5. It may be replied that this would make God partial; but even so, has not God the right to be partial? If God is just to all, has He not the right to be partial? Has He not the right to do as He will with His own? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

The truth of this doctrine is suggested by analogy. It may be true, as often asserted, that every man has a chance, but all will admit that every man has not an equal chance. The child that is born of criminal parents in a back alley does not have an equal opportunity with the

child with better heredity and environment. This is equally as true of nations as it is of individuals. Out of all the nations of the earth, God chose the Jews as His own peculiar people. It is not our business to inquire why, but sufficient for us to know that it was "according to His good pleasure". One will hardly claim that China or Africa has the same chance for great achievements as America. There can be no doubt that nature and grace show favors without explanation or apology. It is the old, old story of "Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated".

Here, as elsewhere, our final appeal is to the Book. What, then, saith the Scripture? "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved, but for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened." Matt. 24:22. "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. 24:24. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25:34. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and

bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." John 15:16. "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." Matt. 17:8, 9. "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the Word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts 13:48. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we say, then, to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with him freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Romans 8:29-33. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath

before ordained that we should walk in them.” Eph. 2:10. “For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.” I. Thess. 5:9. “But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” II. Thess. 2:13.

In the face of such overwhelming proof from the Scriptures, we can only rest in the eternal purposes of a loving Heavenly Father; knowing that He doeth all things well. The Lord rules, let the earth rejoice! We are well aware that the charge is often made that this makes of man, a machine and prevents good works. As a matter of fact, the exact contrary is true. With few exceptions, the men who have dominated the religious thinking of mankind, have believed and taught this doctrine. A great majority of the world’s greatest missionaries have believed it with their whole heart. Spurgeon, than whom there has probably not risen a greater since the death of Paul, firmly believed and continually taught this precious tenet of our faith.

This doctrine would seem to be a consolation to Christ. Obviously, Christ did not die on an uncertainty. He knew that His blood would

not be shed in vain. What a joy to know that He had "lost none whom God had given Him, save the son of perdition." He paid a staggering price, but He knew the price was not paid in vain. It is said that when Dwight L. Moody had preached a sermon in the outskirts of London, Mr. Sankey sang the "Ninety and Nine." A few moments later, a little Gipsy boy said, "Mister, won't you sing that song again?" Mr. Sankey again sang the song. After many years, Gipsy Smith came to this country to hold revival meetings. While here, he visited Mr. Sankey, now old and blind. Bowing by Mr. Sankey's chair, Gipsy Smith said: "Now, Brother Sankey, sing the song you sang for me when I was a little Gipsy boy, in the long ago." As of old, he sang:

"There were ninety and nine that safely lay,
In the shelter of the fold.
But one was out on the hills away,
Far off from the gates of gold.
Away on the mountain he heard its cry,
Was sick and helpless and ready to die
Was sick and helpless and ready to die."

"For none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed,
Or how dark was the night the Lord went through
To save His sheep that were lost."

Even as did Christ, he saw of the "travail of his soul and was satisfied".

This doctrine is likewise an unspeakable consolation to the believer. It makes salvation all of grace, thus humbling pride and excluding boasting. It minimizes man, but glorifies God. Without it, salvation could not be a certainty with any man. Panoplied with the imperial power of the assurance, that his peace, calling and election are sure, he can defy all the powers of death, hell and the grave, and rest serenely on the grace that never fails. Without the dynamic of this doctrine, Christian assurance is impossible, and apostasy inevitable. It gives dignity to the Christian calling and lifts Christian life out of the realm of chance, and places it in the unfailing purposes of God.

Let no recalcitrant sinner attempt to justify his wickedness by the doctrine of election. We are commanded to preach the Gospel to all the world, and everyone that repents and believes, shall be saved. There is not a sinner in all the world who is willing to trust Christ that cannot be saved. No sinner who has not honestly and earnestly sought Christ and been unable to find Him, who has humbly asked forgiveness, and failed to receive it, can excuse his lost estate on account of the doctrine of election. Christ com-

manded the preaching of the Gospel, even to those who crucified Him. To the man who placed upon his brow a crown of thorns, the apostle offered a crown of life. To those who drove the nails through His quivering flesh, was offered salvation full and free. To him who plunged the spear in His side, was offered the water of the fountain of life freely.

The grandeur and glory of this great doctrine will appear only in all its beauty, power and blessing when we join with the "mighty multitude which no man can number", in ascribing honor and praise to God the Father, who called us according to His own good will, and to God the Son, in whom we were chosen before the foundation of the world, and to God the Holy Spirit, through whom we have sanctification. For now, He has fulfilled His own words, "And he shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather His elect from the four winds, and from one end of heaven to the other".

XIII.

THE DOCTRINE OF MISSIONS.

"Come over into Macedonia, and help us."—Acts 16:9.

The doctrine of missions is the old, old story of Jesus and His love. The earthly philosophy of missions is the burning heart and the helping hand—the desire that others shall share our blessings. Many a poor, lost heathen has, at heart, been a missionary, though not a Christian missionary. Every man or woman who, with unselfish motive, goes or sends, has the instincts of the missionary. Yet only the God-sent man can be a missionary of the Cross.

It is the motive that, in the last analysis, decides the character and worth of the deed. The primary and fundamental motive for missions is God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. If we have been reconciled to God, through Him, we will wish to have a part in the ministry of reconciliation. Gratitude for individual redemption is the divine dynamic for missionary

endeavor, and the Cross is the cradle of the great mission movement now thrilling the heart of the redeemed. A saved man not only believes in salvation for himself, but for others. When Christ gave His life for us, He made it mandatory that we live and long for others. To see Christ is equivalent to a desire to show Him to others. When Christ comes into the heart, that heart will go out to the heathen, at home and abroad. The heart is not so constructed that it can contain Christ in selfish silence. It longs to tell the story of redeeming love to a lost and dying world. To know God is not only to love God, but to love those for whom He gave His Son. "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so"; yea, they will say so. It would be as easy to quench the fires of Vesuvius as to still the missionary longing of the regenerate soul.

Another motive for missions, is the love of man. If we say we love God whom we have not seen, we cannot deny our love to our brother whom we have seen. Love for man is the consequent of our love for the Saviour of men. We love Christ because He first loved us, and we love others because He first loved them. We love them not on account of their loveliness, but on account of Christ's love for them. If we love "every creature," we will wish the "good

news" carried to every creature. Whether we believe it or not, the whole world is akin. Adam is the father of us all, which makes us brothers, according to the flesh. To deny this fact is to ask with Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The question, "Who is my neighbor?" has been answered, once for all, by the Son of God, our Saviour. "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and one of these commandments is to "preach the Gospel to every creature." Love will hear and must heed the cry of the centuries, "Come over and help us!"

The love of our country should prompt us to missionary activity. The perpetuity of our civilization depends upon the spread of the Gospel. The heathen nations will be Christianized, or America will be paganized. Thousands, opposed to our Government and our God, are coming to our country. Either they will influence us or we shall influence them. Their ideals, or ours, must prevail.

All other democracies have failed because they have not been predicated upon New Testament principles. Should we forsake these precious principles upon which our civic and social institutions are founded, we are destined to follow the failure of all previous attempts at self-government. Our civilization is as depend-

ent upon the missionary spirit as the Christianity upon which it is founded. The genius of our institutions must be taught to others or perish with us. Propagation or deterioration is the essential logic of our situation. Heathenism is not only a problem but a peril, and one that we cannot longer ignore. If we would look to the life of our nation, we must look to the lives of other nations. Self-preservation demands Christian intervention. And just here, it is well to remember that the only way our nation can preserve its present power is by taking the Gospel to all the world. In the last analysis, it is give and live, or take and die. If our flag is to continue to wave over the land of the free and the home of the brave, we must practice the Gospel at home and preach it abroad.

The fact that Christ has commanded missions, should be sufficient for every Christian. Obedience to Christ is impossible without missionary endeavor. The command is to "preach the Gospel to every creature," and the only question is, Will we obey His command? He has said that if we love Him we will keep His commands. So, then, if we love Him we will keep His commands, and we cannot keep His commands without doing missionary work. The

command to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature is as clear and binding as the command to be baptized.

In my judgment, no one would have ever doubted the missionary obligation had it not been for the cost entailed in fulfilling the obligation. It is the price, and not the principle, of missions, that gives offense. It is not that we love missions less, but the dollar more. It is not that we particularly object to sending the Gospel abroad, but we specially prefer keeping our dollars at home.

Covetousness is the consuming curse of our century, and the crux of the contention against missions. Covetousness, which is idolatry, is the chief cause for the continuation of idolatry in heathen lands. The time is not far distant when a confession of faith will be synonymous with a missionary contribution. The man who will not preach the Gospel with his purse should not profess it with his lips. If God's people could once realize that all they are and all they have belongs to God, and that they should administer their possessions as stewards for the real owner, a better day would dawn for a benighted world. Think of it! last year, the American people spent more for chewing gum than they did for home and foreign missions, and yet we are told

that our people are doing all that they reasonably can for this commanding cause. He who has grace in his heart should manifest that grace by gracious giving.

The time has come when conscience should have its proper place in the domain of missions. The man who robs God, to the hurt of the ungodly, should feel the sting of conscience as keenly as though he had robbed his fellowman. It is not a question of whether we will give to missions, but will we pay our debts to Him who created us, redeemed us, and made us all we are, and gave us all we have. Our debt is to Deity, though humanity is to share its benefits. No debt, therefore, can be more pressing or sacred than the mission debt. It should not be considered a question of cost, but of worth to a dying world. Many of us, God has not required to go, or send one of our children, and the least that we can do, is to send our money. Can we, then, with a clear conscience, withhold our means from this God-ordained work?

Surely, the time is at hand when principle should supplant the place of sentiment in our missionary operations. The witchery of words, or effervescent emotion, will not constitute an abiding basis for mission work and offering. The whole subject should be placed in the realm

of obedience to the commands of Christ. The imperative of missions is our undeniable obligation to God.

In spite of some discouraging features, the prospect for mission conquest was never brighter. There is a mighty moving of the hearts of the redeemed to the lost millions of earth. Beyond doubt, a better day is dawning, and the day is not distant when the Gospel shall be preached as a witness to all the world. Multitudes, Multitudes in the Valley of Decision! The clouds are lifting from the valleys, and the shadows from the hills—

“The morning light is breaking,
The darkness disappears;
The sons of earth are waking
To penitential tears.”

XIV.

BAPTISTS AND UNION MEETINGS.

"Shall two walk together, except they have agreed?"—Amos 3:3.

I have been requested to state my objections to Baptists' entering union meetings. In complying with this quite reasonable request, I may say that, as I see it, the reasons why Baptists should not engage in such meetings are several and insuperable.

First of all, when a Baptist Church enters a union meeting, it does by such an act, expressly or impliedly, declare that the various denominations are all equally churches of Christ. Obviously, this is equivalent to affirming that the doctrines of other denominations are of equal merit with their own. We are hardly ready to believe that Baptists are prepared to say that sprinkling is as scriptural as immersion, or that the doctrine of apostasy is as good as that of the final perseverance of the saints, or that baptism to wash away sins is as

valid as believers' baptism. Probably few Baptists can be found who will affirm that doctrines antithetic to their own are as scriptural as their own, yet this is exactly what they do say when they enter into union meetings with other denominations.

We believe it an incontrovertible truth, and one that is commonly conceded, that a union meeting is an emphatic endorsement of the church-branch theory. It is a notable fact that the majority of those who participate in such meetings are supporters of the church-branch theory. This theory is the prolific parent of a multitude of hurtful heresies, and if carried in practice to its logical conclusion, will surely sound the death-knell of Baptist churches. If other denominations are as scriptural as Baptist churches, one is nothing less than a simpleton to incur the odium and bear the reproach of being a Baptist.

Another exceedingly serious objection to Baptists' entering union meetings, is that in so doing, they tacitly agree not to preach their distinctive doctrines. These doctrines we hold as vital, and as constituting the greatest justification for our existence. To suppress them is to forfeit our right to exist as a separate and peculiar people. No gentleman, much less a

Christian, will preach a distinctive and divisive doctrine in a union meeting. Such an act would not only be a breach of taste, but of ethics. We do not hesitate to say that were we to enter a union meeting, which we have never done, and with our present light, never expect to do, we would "tote fair," and studiously avoid anything concerning Christ or His truth that could fairly be construed to be of a controversial nature. To do this would involve a compromise of Christ and His teaching, that to my mind is not only unspeakable, but unthinkable. To avoid such a situation we prefer to do the work which we believe God has given us to do, and to do it in a way which we believe is well pleasing in His sight. To obviate the necessity of compromise, and to escape entangling alliances, we prefer to attend to our own business and leave others lovingly alone.

Another weighty argument against the union meeting is the fact that it has been thoroughly tried out and found wanting. It is an undeniable fact that a large portion of those who profess faith in such meetings never connect themselves with any church, and when they do, many of them often prove a burden rather than a blessing to the churches they join. The results of these meetings have been discredited by all

denominations, and more and more the churches are fighting shy of such efforts. The whole truth is, that a number of preachers would refuse to go into such meetings were they not afraid of public sentiment and their own churches. By a specious process of reasoning, they bring themselves to believe that their churches would suffer greater harm by holding themselves aloof from union efforts. In other words, they prefer getting into the band-wagon to taking chances of being run over by it. My answer to such a course of conduct would be that the whole question is one of principle and not of expediency. In my day, on more than one occasion, the attempt has been made to battle-whang us into such meetings, but we have steadfastly refused to be cajoled or coerced into these enterprises.

Another, and, if possible, still more serious objection to union meetings is that in the very nature of the case, a union meeting is impossible. I make bold to say that there is no such thing as a real, genuine union meeting. A union meeting presupposes that the parties to the meeting are united in purpose and effort. That this is true of the several denominations engaged in a so-called union meeting, no one can affirm. A real Baptist should, and would, hope that every

convert in such a meeting would join a Baptist Church. Certainly, other denominations would be justified in cherishing a similar hope. In other words, each denomination concerned in the combined effort would like to have the lion's share of the converts. As a matter of fact, there is often a scramble and unkind feelings over this very question. Evidently, the parties to such a performance are not agreed in heart or hope. Besides, a real union presupposes not only an identity of interests, but an identity of essence and quality. We may unite a man and a woman, but not a man and a monkey. Two mules and two oxen do not make four mules or four oxen. To further demonstrate that a union meeting is an absolute impossibility, we challenge anyone to state a plan of salvation that will be acceptable to Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Campbellites. And yet it is not an uncommon thing to see this aggregation hooked up in a combined effort, trying to make the world believe that they are agreed on the plan of salvation. At best, the union meeting symbolizes an agreement that does not exist, and cannot exist until there are radical changes.

For example, we are commanded to preach the duty of baptism. That immersion only is baptism is a closed question with Baptists. It

follows, therefore, that Baptists believe they are commanded to preach immersion. This being true, should a Baptist preacher place himself in a position where he is forced to disobey a plain command of Christ? If he dared preach the duty of a believer to be immersed, the imaginary union would be quickly broken. The only possible excuse for a Baptist preacher's entering a union meeting would be a knowledge of the fact that his preaching would break up the meeting. But even to make this excuse available, he should give notice, in advance, of the character of the preaching he expected to do. Should he do this, he would not be permitted to enter the meeting.

If it be a fact, and it is, that a man tacitly agrees to remain silent on certain distinctive doctrines, in a union meeting, would it not be well for all parties concerned to enter into a written agreement as to what particular doctrine or doctrines they are not to preach? Would it be any more reprehensible to sign an agreement not to preach a certain doctrine than to have a tacit understanding not to do it? Certainly, if one is engaged in an enterprise in which he is expected to suppress a part of what he believes to be the Gospel, he owes it to himself and others to state how much he expects

to suppress. This is a fair statement of the facts, and one to which many will conform in theory, but not in practice.

Another very pertinent question is, If the various denominations can unite for thirty days, why not indefinitely? Every argument for a union meeting is an argument for church union by compromise and cancellation. If church union is good for thirty days, why not for five years? and if for five years, why not for all time? We may as well learn, first as last, that differences cannot be eradicated by suppression or denial. And while no one regrets more than the speaker, the deplorable divisions among believers, deception and dissimulation are even worse than division. Specific statement and contention, with fervent prayer for divine guidance, is our only hope for such doctrinal agreement as will permit us to labor together conscientiously and consistently.

Until the various denominations can see, eye to eye, and face to face, let them pursue in love what they believe to be their God-given paths, though these paths may separate them one from another.

XV.

THE AUTHORITY TO BAPTIZE.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Matt. 28:19.

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism."—Eph. 4:5.

That the authority to baptize was given by Christ to some one, will be admitted by all. The only question, then, to be determined is, To whom was this authority given? The proper answer to this question is not only desirable on its own account, but for the peaceful and permanent settlement of other questions that have logically grown out of it. On these questions, excellent brethren of equal faith and learning have differed, and at times, to the disturbing of our brotherhood.

The speaker believes, and the more he has studied the question, the more strongly he believes that the commission to baptize was de-

livered to the church, and should therefore be restricted to the church. And this raises the question as to what constitutes a scriptural church. Many will agree that the authority to baptize was given to the churches, reserving to themselves the right to define a church. It will be admitted, if the various denominations are all true churches of Christ, they have a perfect right to administer the ordinances. If the church branch theory is true, the question of alien baptism can never arise, as the baptism of each of them would equal the baptism administered by the other.

Baptists, generally, hold that baptism is a church ordinance, and therefore is to be administered by Baptist churches. Our practice also is in perfect conformity with our faith, as every candidate for baptism at our hands is voted upon, and if accepted, his or her baptism is authorized by the church. If baptism is a church ordinance, then the authority to administer it must be restricted to the church, for, if taken beyond the church, it ceases to be a church ordinance. If, to the contrary, it is not a church ordinance, then all our churches have long been engaged in the sinful practice of usurping authority, and should at once cease to exercise this authority, and never again, under any cir-

cumstances, authorize the baptism of anyone. It is, or it is not, a church ordinance. If it be a church ordinance, let the churches alone exercise it; if it be not, let them cease to claim or practice it. Churches should not be held responsible for the preservation of an ordinance not controlled by them.

If the authority to baptize does not rest with the churches, with whom does it rest? If the authority to baptize has been committed to the preachers, then they alone should authorize and administer it, and in turn the churches should cease to usurp the preacher's authority. Why should a pastor recommend a candidate to the church for baptism, if the pastor has the right to pass on the candidate's fitness for baptism?

If it be claimed that the ordinance of baptism has been committed to the individual Christian, then baptism becomes an individual ordinance, and can be administered by any Christian man, or woman, anywhere and under all circumstances. Nor should the church or preacher take from the individual his rights in the premises. Surely Christ has committed the ordinance to some one, or some class, and if so, let this one, or this class, exercise the authority given them. If it be claimed that Christ author-

ized baptism, but did not commit it to anyone in particular, then no one can claim authority to administer it, and the ordinance should be promptly abolished.

Thus it appears that the advocates of alien baptism are forced, by the logic of the situation, to the position that the conscience of the individual is the final test of the validity of baptism. Naturally enough, this is the usual argument that is offered to sustain the doctrine. Assuming then, for the sake of argument, that the validity of baptism is to be determined by the conscience of the one to whom it is administered, it will readily appear that the argument not only proves too much for its advocates, but it is a clear case of *reductio ad absurdum*. For example, should a candidate for membership apply to a Baptist church, and state that his conscience is satisfied with his baptism, the church would be precluded from rejecting his baptism, whether that baptism was by sprinkling or pouring, or for the remission of sins. A fair sample of the application of this doctrine of conscience-baptism was afforded by a Baptist church in Boston, which recently received quite a number on their sprinkling for baptism. This naturally came about by substituting con-

science for a command of Christ, and sentiment for divine authority.

Another fatal objection to receiving alien baptism is that to do so forces us to surrender the doctrine of restricted communion. We cannot consistently keep one from the Lord's table on account of not being baptized and then receive the same baptism when offered to our church. If his baptism is not sufficient to entitle him to the Lord's Supper, it should not be sufficient to entitle him to full membership in the church of which the Lord's Supper is only a part. If he is entitled to the whole, he is evidently entitled to all the parts.

It will not suffice to say that we exclude them from the Lord's Supper on the ground that they are members of unscriptural churches. The fact that we receive their baptism is conclusive evidence that we deem their churches scriptural. If they are not scriptural churches, then they have no right to administer baptism, and we should, therefore, reject their baptism when offered us. Neither scripturally nor logically can we acknowledge their baptism and then deny them the Supper. Anything then that comes into direct conflict with an accepted Baptist doctrine ~~must~~, among Baptists at least, be rejected.

To admit that other churches differing from us in faith and polity, are scriptural churches, as many do, leads to "confusion worse confounded". It forces us into conflict with another well established Baptist custom, that of ordaining ministers who come to us from other denominations. If they come to us from scriptural churches, then their ordinations are as valid as ours, and it is both sinful and foolish for us to insist on ordaining them. So far as the literature of the subject extends there is not a single instance of a Baptist church's sanctioning the ordination of a different denomination. We should at least be consistent, and to be so we must be scriptural. If alien baptism is from heaven, then our churches should preach and practice it; if it be of man, we should reject it. A majority of the cases of alien baptism that are received by our churches are administered by ministers who have never been baptized. How can a man communicate that which he never possessed? We would not allow one of our own unbaptized brethren to administer baptism, then why permit an unbaptized member of another denomination to do for us that which we would not allow one of our own to do? Charity should begin at home,

and this particular species of it should not begin either at home or abroad.

It is further true that a majority of Pedobaptist ministers who administer immersion do not believe in it, and even go so far as to preach against it, administering it only in extreme cases, and then only to prevent the loss of a member. In such cases they perform that in which they do not believe, "and whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

Christ never commanded anyone to preach one thing and practice another. Besides, if a Pedobaptist or a regenerating-baptizer can baptize one person for our churches, he may baptize all persons for our churches, and if he can scripturally baptize all who come to us, then, Baptist churches are not essential to the carrying out of the commission of Christ. If Baptist churches are not essential to the carrying out of the commission of Christ, then we have no scriptural authority for our existence, and the sooner we cease to exist, the better for all concerned.

A plea has been made in behalf of alien baptism in the case of the missionary. It is claimed that on the foreign field there is often no church near at hand to authorize the baptism of the candidate, and that, therefore,

the missionary must baptize without church authority. This, at best, is special pleading, but if admitted as true, it would not justify its acceptance in our country. As a matter of fact, however, the missionary has been ordained by his home church and his very ordination gave him the right to baptize, under proper conditions, and in any case authorized by his church. If necessary, the missionary may, in extreme cases, be authorized by a Baptist Church to receive and baptize a candidate into its fellowship. However, if a case should arise where there was no Baptist Church to authorize baptism, then simply allow the candidate to remain unbaptized. The brethren who propose this hypothesis seem to proceed upon the idea that such a one would be lost unless baptized. Such a candidate could well afford to wait, or like Christ, walk a long way to secure scriptural baptism. Hypothetical and exceptional cases should not, however, be allowed to operate against a well-established scriptural rule. There is not a single baptism in the New Testament, where the administrator did not have authority to baptize and that authority given by God, Christ or the Church.

It is sometimes urged that if the validity of baptism in anywise rests with the administrator,

the person baptized could never know whether his baptism was genuine. Were this true, which it is not, it still would not justify alien baptism. A baptism administered by Judas Iscariot was perfectly valid, as long as he was acknowledged by Christ as his disciple. His official acts were clearly valid until he was deprived of his apostleship. If one wishes to secure license to engage in business, he must apply to one who is legally authorized to issue licenses, for however honest he may be, or whatever price he may pay, his license, if obtained from any other source, would be worthless. Ignorance, in spite of opportunity, is not a sufficient excuse in the realm of law or grace.

It is freely admitted by all that the question of alien baptism could not have arisen in New Testament times, as all the churches were of the same faith and order. Baptists believe that they are in full accord with New Testament teaching, and that their churches have the same faith and polity, and are therefore identical with the churches of the New Testament times. If other churches are not in accord with New Testament teaching (if they are, we are not), then for us to accept their baptism, would be to offer a premium on their departure from "The Faith once for all delivered to the saints."

The charge that those who contend for Baptist baptism are trying to introduce a new test of fellowship, to say the least, lacks verisimilitude. So far as the information of the writer extends, no one who has written on this subject has penned a line toward making the question a test of fellowship. If it be true, as the advocates of this doctrine admit, that Baptist baptism is always to be preferred, then should we not lift our voices in favor of that which is best and by all lawful and brotherly means discourage the reception of that which is confessedly inferior?

It is a closed question, among Baptists at least, that regular Baptist baptism is Bible baptism, and that it is the baptism commanded by Christ and practiced by his disciples. It is further held by Baptists that there is but one baptism taught in the New Testament (one Lord, one faith, one baptism—Eph. 4:5), and that this one baptism is the identical baptism now administered by Baptist churches. It therefore necessarily follows, that any baptism which is alien to and different from this baptism, cannot be scriptural baptism. It would be as easy to demonstrate from the Scriptures two faiths or two Gods as to demonstrate two baptisms. Things that are equal to the same thing must be equal to each other, and things that are

alien to each other cannot be equal to the same thing. If alien baptism is scriptural baptism, then it is the only baptism, and, therefore, is the only baptism that should be received by Baptist churches. This, of course, would take from Baptist churches the right or necessity of administering the rite of baptism. If Baptist baptism is identical with the one scriptural baptism, then it is the only baptism that ought to be received, or administered by Baptist churches.

The attempt to classify baptism into regular and irregular, is both unscriptural and unreasonable. Baptism, in the very nature of the case, is scriptural or unscriptural, valid or invalid. It would be just as unwise to attempt to classify American dollars as regular and irregular. An American dollar, to be good, must be regularly issued, and, if irregularly issued, is a counterfeit dollar, hence utterly worthless. So with baptism, it is scriptural and regular, or unscriptural and, therefore, irregular.

Even the advocates of alien baptism freely admit that it is irregular, and that it tends to disorder. Why, then, should we encourage a thing that is admittedly irregular and disorderly, and that, too, when we are commanded to do all things in a decent and orderly manner?—I. Cor. 14:40. Christ put himself to consider-

able inconvenience, and walked a long way, to get regular baptism at the hands of the first Baptist preacher. If Baptist baptism is the best baptism, why content ourselves with an inferior article, or encourage others in so doing?

The fact that Baptist baptism is acceptable to all denominations, is due to the fact that they have zealously guarded it through the years. Should the time ever come when Baptists would place their baptism upon a parity with that administered by other denominations, it is quite likely that it would soon cease to be universally esteemed as absolutely equivalent to New Testament baptism.

The logician is not born of woman that can justify the reception of alien baptism, and, at the same time, deny the scripturalness of the organization that administers it. The truth is, and we may as well face it, the whole question depends upon the definition of a church. Certainly, it is not pleasant to deny the claims of the various denominations to be scriptural churches, yet we believe the logic of the Baptist contention inevitably forces us to this conclusion. And while this may be esteemed harsh, the opposite conclusion appears impossible. A very vital question is, how much of error can an organization hold and still be a scriptural

church? All Baptists will admit that denominations holding a faith differing from theirs, must hold some error. How much, then, if any, can they hold and still be New Testament churches? That many, guided by sentiment rather than Scripture, have gone to ridiculous extremes in this connection, there can be no doubt. For example, there are those, and withal well-meaning people, who are disposed to regard the Christian Science conglomeration as a church. We seem slow to learn that if a certain statement is true, the opposite of that statement is necessarily false. The sooner we learn that we can never correct error by endorsing or condoning it, the better it will be for the triumph of truth.

By common consent, Baptists have preserved believers' baptism through all the years, and in view of the fact that they have been permitted to be custodians of this Christ-commanded ordinance, they cannot afford to jeopardize the ordinance, or rob the churches of the fruits of their past victories.

XVI.

WOMEN SPEAKING IN MIXED ASSEMBLIES.

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

"And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

"What! Came the word of God out from you? Or came it unto you only?

"If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

"But if a man be ignorant, let him be ignorant."—I. Cor. 14:34-38.

"I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. . . . Let the women learn in silence with all subjection.

"But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over a man, but to be in silence.

"For Adam was first formed; then Eve.

"And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."—I. Timothy 2:8, 11-14.

I do not defer to any man in my unfeigned admiration for womankind, or in my estimate of her wonderful worth and work. Yea, it is on account of this exalted idea of her splendid sphere and mighty mission that I am anxious that her activities should be along scriptural lines. Not only am I in favor of woman's work in the churches, but in every church which I have served there has been a noble band of godly women in whose work I have rejoiced, yea, and will rejoice. And just here it may not be amiss to note the determined effort of some misguided men to make it appear that those who oppose women speaking in the churches are enemies to the work that is being done by our women. This is not only begging the question, but is a species of political trickery unworthy of a Christian.

The only question is, What does the Bible teach on the subject? It is not even a question of what would be the result if we should enforce the commands of Scripture in this connection. Obviously, it is our business to comply with God's commands, and God's business to take care of the results.

The Scriptures relating to this question are so positive and so plain that the wonder is that

there could have ever been any doubt as to their meaning. Indeed, their meaning has been so manifest that there is not a single commentary that does not interpret these passages as forbidding the public speaking of women in the churches. The first question that very naturally presents itself is one concerning the correctness of the text. Some years since, Dr. T. T. Eaton consulted the various versions of the Bible, giving the different translations of these Scriptures. From these we take several and add another:

The Revised Version—

"Let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as the law also says. And if they wish to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church. What? did the word of God come for them from you? or came it unto you alone? If any one thinks himself a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge the things which I write unto you are the Lord's commandments.

"I desire therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and disputing. . . . Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I permit not the woman to teach, nor to have authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived is fallen into transgression."

Here is the American Bible Union Version—

"Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted to them to speak, but they are to be in subjection, as the law also says. And if they wish to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church. Did the word of God come for them from you? or came it unto you alone?

"If any one thinks himself a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge the things I write unto you are the Lord's commandments."

The Douay Version (Roman Catholic, from the Latin Vulgate) says—

"Let women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted them to speak, but to be subject, as also the law saith. But if they would learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church."

"I will therefore that men pray in every place, lifting up pure hands without anger and contention. . . . Let the woman learn in silence, with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to use authority over the man: but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not seduced: but the woman being seduced was in t' transgression."

Wicliffe's Version (from the Vulgate) says—

"Women in churches be still, for it is not suf-

ferred them to speak, but to be subject as the law saith, but if they would anything learn, at home ask their husbands, for it is a foul thing for a woman to speak in the church."—I. Cor. 14:34, 35.

"A woman learn in silence with all subjection, But I suffer not a woman to teach, neither to have lordship on the husband, but to be in silence, for Adam was first formed, afterward Eve, and Adam was not deceived; but the woman was deceived in breaking the law."—I. Tim 2:11-14.

Wakefield says—

"Let women be silent in your assemblies: for they are not permitted to speak, but must be in subjection as the law also commandeth. And, if they wish to learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; as it is dishonorable for a woman to speak in a congregation.

"What? did the word of God come forth from you? or hath it reached you only? If any one have the character of a teacher, or of a spiritual person, he will acknowledge that what I am writing to you are the commandments of the Lord; but whoso doth not acknowledge this, let him be unknown as a spiritual person."

John Wesley's Version puts it thus—

"Let your women be silent in the churches; for it is not permitted them to speak, but to be in subjection, as the law also saith. And if they desire to

learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is indecent for a woman to speak in the assembly"

Tyndal's Version, on these passages, reads thus—

"Let your wives keep silence in the congregations. For it is not permitted unto them to speak, but let them be under obedience as saith the law. If they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is a shame for women to speak in the congregation."

"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. I suffer not a woman to teach, neither to have authority over a man: but for to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, and then Eve. Also Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and was in transgression."

Cranmer's Version is as follows—

"Let your women keep silence in the congregations. For it is not permitted unto them to speak: but to be under obedience, as saith the law. If they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is a shame for women to speak in the congregation."

Next to the Bible, it is quite natural that we should look to the world's greatest biblical scholars for light on the sacred text. This is even

the more natural, in this instance, in which the world's greatest scholars are all agreed. It may be well for us just here to give heed to what the world's greatest commentaries have to say on this subject—

Dr. Hodge says—

"In the Old Testament it has been predicted that 'your sons and your daughters shall prophesy;' a prediction which the Apostle Peter quotes as verified on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:17, and in Acts 21:9, mention is made of four daughters of Philip who prophesied. The Apostle himself seems to take for granted, in 11:5, that women might receive and exercise the gift of prophecy. It is therefore only the **public exercise** of the gift that is prohibited."

The Patrick, Lowth, etc., Commentary says—

"Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak (by way of teaching or prophesying, but only by joining with the church in prayer and psalmody), but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. . . . In Corinth the women not only prophesied in the church, but they did it with the head uncovered. I. Cor. 11:5; the latter indecency he corrects there, and the first here, see I. Tim. 2:12." Com. on I. Cor. 14:34.

Godet, on I. Cor. 14:34—

"The saints, distributed in churches, locally speaking, yet form only one great spiritual whole: the Corinthians should not isolate themselves from the community of saints by adopting customs rejected by all the rest of the body, such as the speaking of women in the assemblies.

"And as the attitude of authority over the man is contrary to that of obedience which was imposed on the woman during the present economy, he draws the conclusion that the speaking of the woman in public is in contradiction to the position assigned to her by the divine will expressed in the law. It is easy to see why the apostle substitutes the general idea; **to be subject**, which relates to the whole life of women, for that of **not speaking** in the assemblies; it is because the silence of women in worship is only an application of the general subordination which is imposed on them in relation to man."

Ellicott, on I. Tim. 2:12—

"Every form of **public address or teaching** is clearly forbidden as at variance with woman's proper duties and destination.

"This, according to his view, would conflict with modesty and with woman's rightful position, and would lead to many evils. It is an evasion to discriminate between women speaking in **church meetings** and women addressing general congregations. The apostle's objection was to the public

character of the act, and when he is speaking of the 'meetings of the church' in this very chapter, he is referring to gatherings to which unbelievers had access."

Dean Stanley, on I. Cor. 14:34, says—

"One particular instance of confusion growing out of the neglect of order in the control of the gifts, was the speaking of women in the assemblies. This custom, like that of appearing unveiled (11:3-16), he condemns on the ground that he forbade it in all the assemblies of Christians. The speaking of women was also expressly forbidden in the synagogues."

"The prohibition to women to speak in public is explicit, stringent, absolute, universal, and fortified by appeals to the law of revelation, and the law of nature. The apostle reiterates it in various forms, as if to prevent the possibility of being misunderstood."—Webster & Wilkerson.

"Let your women keep silent, etc. This rule is positive, explicit, and universal. There is no ambiguity in the expressions; and there can be no difference of opinion, one would suppose, in regard to their meaning. The sense evidently is that in all those things which he specified, the women were to keep silence, they were to take no part. . . It was contrary to all decency and propriety that they should appear in that manner in public. He here argues against the practice on every ground; forbids it altogether, and shows in every consideration

it was to be regarded as improper for them even so much as to ask a question in time of public service.”—Barnes.

“To reconcile these verses with the Scripture referred to (I. Cor. 11:2-16), it seems most natural to suppose that some of the Corinthian women were used to speaking publicly, when not under any immediate or extraordinary impulse of the Holy Spirit; and perhaps they interrupted the other speakers by inquiries and objections, according to the disputatious spirit which prevailed. The apostle therefore laid it down as a general rule (to which the foregoing case was the only exception), that women must not be allowed to speak in the public congregation, or to assume the office of teachers, or disputants: for this by no means consisted with that subjection to their husbands, which the law of God inculcated.”—Thomas Scott.

“33b, 34. These go together. For whereas verse 33b would add no force to the calm assertion of verse 33a, it introduces suitably, by making it valid for all churches everywhere, the strong and strongly confirmed injunction of verse 34. Similar references to other churches in 4:17; 7:17; 11:16. Of the saints: reminds us that church members stand in a special relation to God. In the churches: general assemblies of men and women. Compare ‘over the man,’ in the similar prohibition of I. Tim. 11:12. Consequently, this verse is not inconsistent with 11:5, where women are tacitly permitted to ‘pray’ and ‘prophecy,’ but limits these exercises to more private meetings consisting chiefly or wholly of women. Notice the coincidence of 11:5. The

women who are ready to speak in public would be also ready to lay aside their distinctive female head dress."—Beet.

"The deviation of the Corinthians from the right exercise of the Charismata was further shown in permitting women who were possessed of the gifts (for such alone can be intended to speak in public. This is reproved by the apostle, appealing likewise to the word of God. Gen. 3:16.) Women were to be submissive to their husbands in all things, and to learn, but not to teach. . . . The speaking with tongues on the contrary he rarely permits, and commands under all circumstances, the observance of decency (antithesis of the unseemliness of women's speaking in the assembly, verse 35), and order (in opposition to the irregular speaking all at once, verse 27 seq.) . . . To exhibit more clearly the dependence of the woman on the man, the apostle adds an argument from the second chapter of Genesis. The fact that woman was formed out of the rib of man and was destined to be his helper is employed by Paul for this purpose. This argument would appear singular in these days, but evidently only because we have not accustomed ourselves to take the Holy Scriptures, especially the Old Testament, so literally. Paul, however, proceeds upon the unqualified divinity of the Old Testament, and the more this is generally recognized, the more admissible shall we learn to regard such proofs."—Ols-hausen's Commentary.

"Appendix to the regulative section regarding the gifts of the Spirit (verses 26-33), directed against the public speaking of women. . . . Therefore it is

preferable to connect the clause with what follows, as is done by Cajetan and most modern expositors: as in all church assemblies of the saints, your women ought to be silent in the church assemblies . . . "excludes in Paul's view, the speaking in the assemblies, inasmuch as the latter appears to him as an act of complying independence. Gen. 3:16. . . . Paul is decided against all undue exaltation and assumption on the part of women in religious things, and it has been the occasion of much evil in the church."—Meyer's Commentary..

John Calvin, on I. Cor. 14:34, speaking of women's addressing mixed assemblies, says—

"It is therefore an argument from things inconsistent. If the woman is under subjection, she is, consequently, prohibited from authority to teach in public." And again: "Paul's reasoning, however, is simple—that authority to teach is not suitable to the station that a woman occupies, because if she teaches she presides over all the men, while it becomes her to be under subjection."

The Bible Commentary (by the bishops and clergy of the Church of England) says, on I. Tim. 2:11—

"Let the women learn in silence, etc. In public worship the men only are to teach as well as to pray. The Apostle had given the same injunction to the Corinthians, and had intimated that it was the

universal regulation 'in all the churches of the saints,' I. Cor. 14:33-36." This is from Prof. Wall.

The Popular Commentary (edited by Dr. Philip Schaff) says, on I. Cor. 14:33-36—

"And that further question comes in most suitably where we find it (ch. xiv), under the head of how those extraordinary spiritual gifts, which were of local sanctity, but rather to emphasize the fact that the rule laid down was binding in the more private meetings of disciples as well as in the public gathering of the Ecclesia."

On I. Cor. 14:34-36, and I. Tim. 2:8-12, Dr. John A. Broadus says—

"Now it does not need to be urged that these two passages from the Apostle Paul do definitely and strongly forbid that women shall speak in mixed public assemblies. No one can afford to question that such is the most obvious meaning of the apostle's commands." *Ought Women to Speak*, etc., p. 4.

Conybeare and Howson, in their *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, on I. Cor. 16:33-36—

"The women must not officiate publicly in the congregation." On I. Tim. 2:9-15, they say: "The Apostle's meaning is that women are to be kept in the path of safety, not by taking upon themselves

the office of the man (by taking a public part in the assemblies of the church, etc.), but by the performance of the peculiar functions which God has assigned to their sex."

Lange's Commentary, on I. Tim. 2:9-15, this part being written by Dr. Van Oosterzee, says:

"As the apostle thus reverts to public prayers just commended, he now states more exactly when, how and through whom these should be conducted, and with this he adds his special counsel to the women as well as the men. The latter, in express distinction from the women, are alone to direct public prayers. It thus appears that, in the assembly of believers, this duty was not given exclusively to the presiding officer, but was performed without limitation by the members of the church. The apostle does not object to this, but only orders that the women shall abstain entirely from it, which, perhaps, in more recent times, they had not always done."

To this list from our Southern Zion may be added such names as Fuller, Hackett, Boyce, Broadus, Carroll, Hawthorne and Eaton. If these Baptist worthies have all lived and died in such painful, if not sinful, ignorance of the Scriptures, we may well ask if there is any truth held by Baptists that may be considered a closed question. For nearly two thousand

years, Baptists have been practically united on this question. It is worthy of note that only since the launching of the suffragette movement has there been any division of sentiment among us on this question. This movement, whatever may be its merits, has had a tendency to discount Scriptural authority. To such an extent is this true that the noted leaders in this movement have, with remarkably few exceptions, been known as neutrals or belligerents in their attitude to the New Testament. In fact, not a few of them publicly repudiate the teaching of Paul concerning women.

Unfortunately, those who claim that Paul did not mean to forbid women's speaking in the churches fail to tell us what he really did mean. They deny that he meant what the consensus of the world's scholarship claims that he meant, yet they persistently refuse to tell us what he did intend to teach. An attempted exegesis by some of those who claim that Paul did not mean what he said, or did not say what he meant, would certainly be refreshing, and perhaps amusing.

Since the objections to the plain teaching of Paul are few and well defined, it may be well to consider them just here.

The first, and possibly the most common, ob-

jection to Paul's teaching, especially among advanced women is "that he was a disgruntled old bachelor, and hence prejudiced against women." Were it not for the fact that this claim is so often made, and seemingly with all seriousness, it would seem useless to refute it. It is hardly necessary to say that such a contention discredits Paul's authority as a New Testament writer, and completely invalidates his claim to be inspired. If Paul's prejudice constrained him to misrepresent the will of God in one instance, why not in many, yea, in every instance? According to this contention, Paul's writings are inspired in spots, and anyone who objects to any part of his teaching is permitted to determine the spots. It is impossible, therefore, for one holding this objection to believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures. From the standpoint of the Christian, this objection automatically and axiomatically works its own destruction.

Another very common objection is that Paul's instructions in this regard were given only to the church at Corinth, and only to this church on account of the peculiar conditions existing. This objection is clearly and emphatically answered in the text. In verse 34, the

language is, 'Let your women keep silence in the *churches*.' The plural form "churches," and not church, is used. The reasons assigned in his letter to Timothy, "For Adam was first formed and then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression," obviously pertains to all women. The prohibition, like the reasons given for it, beyond doubt, makes his injunction of universal application. In this connection, Paul further says:

"If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." This, unequivocally, implies that those who will not acknowledge the things Paul wrote as commandments of the Lord are not "spiritual". One of the things that Paul wrote was, "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." It will be observed that Paul affirms that what he commanded the churches concerning women was according to the law and the Gospel. It will be observed, therefore, that the command "to keep silence in the churches," has, if possible,

behind it even more authority than the command to be baptized, since baptism was not enjoined by the law. The claim, then, that Paul's words were applicable only to the church at Corinth, is not only grotesquely gratuitous, but consistently contrary to the rule "in all the churches," and the teaching of the law and the Gospel.

Dr. Broadus well says:

"Why will not Baptist people see the gross inconsistency of vehemently asserting the necessity of conforming to the New Testament in regard to church membership and the ordinances, while they coolly disregard express prohibitions in respect to another matter? Will our honored brethren and sisters please open their eyes, take their latitude and longitude, and see which way they are drifting?

"'Ah, but,' some will say, 'this is a great movement; and it is going to grow. Shall we let the Methodists get all the benefit of it?' Grant for the sake of argument that it seems expedient, and will give denominational power. We let the Methodists get all the benefit of infant baptism, of Arminian theology, of centralized organization, because we think these things are contrary to the New Testament. If Baptists are going to abandon New Testament teachings for the sake of falling in with what they regard as a popular movement, the very reason for their existence has ceased."

Still another objection is that the injunction

applied only to "married" women. This is a cool assumption that Paul did not know how to express himself so as to be understood. Alas, poor Paul! how lamentable his lack of perspicuity!

Let us note for a moment the meaning of the word "women," as used by Paul in this regard. The word translated "women" is *gunee* (*gunaikes*) and according to Thayer, means "a woman of any age, whether a virgin or married, or a widow."

We know of no greater authority than Thayer, nor do we know of anyone who knows Greek that will be disposed to deny his definition. It is worthy of notice that some of the best MSS. omit "your" in verse 34. This fact, if possible, further weakens the case of those who would limit the meaning of the word to "wives". Paul's appeal to the law and his statement that Adam was first formed, and that the woman was first in the transgression demand that the injunction be applied to all women and not restricted to wives. There are many places in the Scriptures where the word cannot mean wives. Translators, commentators and lexicographers are united as to the meaning of this word.

The effort to limit the meaning of the word to married women is not only unscriptural, but contrary to common sense. If any woman should speak in mixed assemblies, good taste would suggest that it should preferably be the married woman. Modesty, which is more than becoming in all women, is especially commendable in the unmarried woman. There is neither Scripture nor reason in limiting the prohibition to married women. As a matter of fact, those who try to maintain this distinction have never been known to object to a married woman's speaking in church. In the last analysis, the argument is made to discredit Paul and to hush the mouths of those who are earnestly contending for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. In this regard, Dr. Eaton sounded the following timely warning:

"It may be well to bear in mind how women's public speaking has been connected with various recent heresies. Spiritualism was started by women—the Misses Fox. Theosophy was started by a woman—Madam Blavatsky. The so-called Christian Science was founded by Mrs. Eddy. Modern Perfectionism began with a woman. All of these sects have favored women's public speaking. The only safety for women and their only true progress lie in strict conformity to Bible teaching. This is not degrading women, it is honoring them. Their work

in the world is no less important than men's, and is no less honored of man and of God. God knows what is best for women as for men, and for us to assume that what He has told us in His Word is not suited to these 'advanced' times, and therefore we must act differently, is blasphemy. It is the same as saying that God does not understand the world, and therefore has made a mistake in the principles He has given us for our guidance. It is not so great blasphemy to say there is no God, as to say there is a foolish God who does not understand what He is about in governing the world."

Another, and an unusually foolish objection is that because some women can speak well, therefore they should speak. This imaginary argument has been offered as a justification for the Asheville episode. In its last analysis, the argument amounts to this—because a man is a successful gambler, therefore he should gamble; because God has given one the power to kill another, therefore he should exercise his gifts to murder. It goes without saying that God has given us the power to do many things that He has commanded us not to do. What right have we to disobey God, because we can disobey Him in a felicitous manner? A mere statement of this objection should be sufficient for its refutation.

Yet another objection to Paul's teaching is

that it is not applicable to our age. This, if true, is indeed deplorable. If it be a fact that the New Testament was only adapted to the age in which it was written, Christians of today should, of all people, be most miserable. This contention adapts God's words to the age, and not the age to the Bible. The Bible is truth for all people, and all time, or it is not inspired, and therefore not the Word of God. And just here, comes much of our trouble in this connection. There is a determined effort upon the part of the enemies of the Cross, to discredit the Bible as being inconsistent with our Twentieth Century civilization. It is tragically true that much of our boasted civilization is contrary to the express teaching of the Bible. Probably it has not occurred to the satellites of our civilization that it might be well to change our civilization to meet the demands of the Bible rather than repudiate the Bible to meet the demands of our civilization. In other words, to make man subject to God, rather than God subject to man. Whenever, and wherever, any civilization comes in conflict with the Scripture, it is then and there that it gives conclusive evidence of its own corruption. The Bible is supposed

to establish a standard for the age, and not the age for the Bible.

As has been well said, "The advocates of this fad are simply following the trend of the age, which is an offshoot of that dangerous, unscriptural thing known as Feminism, whose avowed goal is the abolition of marriage, and the destruction of the home." As Dr. Eaton once remarked: "The advanced woman will never be satisfied until she can become the father of the family."

It is not a matter of surprise that a great majority of the leaders in this movement to disregard the teaching of the Bible are both childless and Christless. As a rule, they have not been known as home-makers or church members.

It is insistently urged that Paul's language cannot mean what it clearly appears to mean, because if so, it would conflict with other Scriptures. The particular case of supposed conflict that is offered in evidence by those who are determined to disregard Paul's prohibition is that of women's prophesying on the day of Pentecost. Concerning this, it is hardly necessary to say that Paul's teaching cannot conflict with other Bible teaching. To so assert, is equivalent to denying his inspiration and making Christ

a contradiction. This is an impossible surmise with the Christian.

Whatever prophesying was done at Pentecost by the women was evidently not of a public nature, nor in mixed assemblies. It will be recalled that a portion, at least, of Peter's sermon is recorded, but no part of one delivered by a woman on that day. As is well known, much of the prophesying, even of the greatest prophets, was addressed to individuals, and not to assemblies. As a matter of fact, but comparatively few of the prophecies of the Bible were delivered to public assemblies. The fact, then, that one prophesied does not imply that he or she prophesied in the presence of either a public or mixed assembly. Paul said that "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," but he did not say this of the women, because public speaking was not their mission. At best, those who affirm the speaking of women before a mixed assembly can only urge an unwarranted inference which conflicts with an unequivocal command. It is identically the argument that is offered by the advocates of infant baptism, and Baptists, of all people, should be the last to offer such an argument.

It is true that there is an instance in the New Testament of a woman's speaking in public. This is found in Rev. 2:20: "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. It will be observed that both the fact of teaching and the character of the teaching is condemned. This was condemned in the church at Thyatira, as in "all the churches."

Now, then, the prohibition against women's speaking in the churches is as plain and explicit as it is possible to make it. Indeed, we defy anyone to make a statement forbidding women's speaking in the churches in language that can be more easily understood than that used by Paul in this regard. We confidently venture the assertion that no one will make the attempt; and if not, why not?

It is somewhat remarkable that not one of those who deny the age-long interpretation of Paul's words will even attempt to give us an exegesis of these passages. The truth is, they cannot and dare not, and are therefore forced to content themselves with a simple negation

without a particle of proof. If Paul did not mean what he said, in the name of common sense and common fairness, why do they not tell us what he did mean? We kindly challenge them to the test.

Paul not only gives the command in language that is well-nigh impossible to misunderstand, but goes further and specifically states the reasons upon which the command is based, as follows:

1. Priority in creation; or as Paul puts it —“For Adam was first formed, then Eve.” I. Tim. 2:13. By creation, man has the precedence, and is the Scriptural head of the home, masculine women, feminine gentlemen, and a few excellent brethren to the contrary notwithstanding. It is a matter of small moment, who may, or may not like it, this is God’s appointment, and we cannot deny it without repudiating the Scriptures.

It is just as true that woman is forbidden to usurp spiritual authority over man in the churches. Leadership in the churches has been given to man, and cannot be scripturally relinquished. To reverse the God-ordained order will mean the ultimate destruction of our homes and churches.

2. The second reason assigned is, "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." I. Tim. 2:14. It is not gallantry, as sometimes suggested, that ignores this Scripture, but ordinary infidelity. The only possible question that can arise is one concerning the truthfulness of the account of Creation as given in Genesis. We regret to state that many of those who are striving to descripturalize and de-womanize woman, laugh to scorn the history of Creation as given in the Book of Genesis.

3. A third reason is found in the law given at the time of the fall as contained in Gen. 3:16: "The determination of thy will shall be unto thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

These reasons were given by Paul as the ground of prohibition for women's speaking in the churches, and we can only invalidate his prohibition by invalidating his reasons; and this can be done only by denying his authority and impeaching his character. Such a task can hardly be coveted by the Christian

Not only does Paul give a command, and the reasons for the command, but further urges obedience to the command by telling them that "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spir-

itual, let him acknowledge the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." I. Cor. 14:37. There is probably no command in all the Bible that is more clearly stated, more strongly sustained with unanswerable argument, and the observance of which is more insistently urged, than the one that the "women keep silence in the churches."

In the past, "Thus saith the Lord," has been to Baptists an end of all controversy, and it is a sad comment on our generation that it is not true of today. Baptists are, essentially, strict constructionists, and the moment they begin to seek authority by inference and implication, they will forever forfeit their age-long contention. May the God of all Grace help us to be true and steadfast in these perilous times. To this end, let us give heed to His words:

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book. If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book." Rev. 22:18, 19.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ACT OF BAPTISM.

It will be granted that every follower of Christ is under obligation to obey every command of Christ. It will also be granted that baptism is a command of Christ, and therefore one to be obeyed by all His followers. Evidently the New Testament teaches some kind of baptism, and only one kind of baptism, "One Lord, one faith, and one baptism." Whatever, then, the baptism commanded in the New Testament, it is the one and only one that should be administered or received by any Christian. The only defensible attitude of the Christian is, "What will thou have me to do?" Blessed be he who has the faith and courage to do his Master's bidding.

That the ~~fact and act of baptism~~ are of great importance may be seen from the following reasons: It is a positive and not a moral command. It is not a command that grows out of the nature of the case, or one predicated upon the fundamental principles of righteousness, but its only basis is the express and explicit words of Christ. There can, therefore, arise no possible question as to the wisdom or worth of the com-

mand, or our duty to obey it. "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Its importance further arises from the fact that it is absolutely essential to church membership. It is the initiatory ordinance to the church, and church membership is impossible without it. It is the first command that meets the believer and is a test of his willingness to do his Master's will. Christ magnified the importance of the act by His own baptism. He not only gave us the precept, but an example of baptism.

A few years since, we visited Athens and were somewhat surprised to find that Pedobaptists almost uniformly practiced immersion. Curiously enough, we were confronted with the paradox of a denomination being Baptist in Greece, and Pedobaptist in America. Scriptural consistency, is, to say the least, a desirable desideratum.

Jesus thought enough of the ordinance to walk fifty miles to be baptized by John in the Jordan. Surely, He would not have gone to this trouble to secure something that was unimportant. He began his public ministry with a command concerning baptism. The one and only question to be determined in this regard is, what constitutes the act of baptism. In the determination of the inquiry, we must necessarily have recourse to the meaning of the word. Inasmuch

as the literature of the Greek language is abundant, our task should be simple and easy. Our search is further facilitated by the fact that the Greeks still speak the language in which the New Testament was written. Surely, the Greeks, of all people, ought to know Greek. In Greece, one and all are agreed that the word "baptizo" means to immerse, to dip, to plunge. The definitions of a few Greek Lexicons should suffice to settle the question.

Prof. J. H. Thayer, in his Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, says "Baptizo," to dip, to plunge, to dip repeatedly, to immerse, to submerge. In the New Testament, it is used particularly of the rite of sacred ablution first instituted by John the Baptist, afterward by Christ's command, received by Christians and adjusted to the nature and contents of their religion: viz., an immersion in water. Liddel & Scott, in the seventh edition of their lexicon, define baptizo to dip in or under water. Prof. E. A. Sophocles, for many years Professor of Greek in Harvard University, in the lexicon of Greek languages, defines baptizo "to immerse, to dip, to plunge, to sink."

Cremer, in his Biblico-Theological Greek Lexicon, says: "Baptizo to immerse, to submerge. The peculiar New Testament and Chris-

tian use of the word to denote immersion for a religious purpose to baptize." Liddel & Scott's and Thayer's are the acknowledged standard lexicons in practically all the great schools of the world, and these two lexicons alone should forever settle the meaning of the word baptizo, the word from which we get our word baptize. We do not know of any Greek lexicon now in existence that defines the word as meaning anything other than immersion. Dr. T. T. Eaton, while Editor of the Recorder, offered \$1,000 for a single instance, in classical or New Testament Greek, in which the word "baptizo" meant to sprinkle. This reward stood for years, and was never claimed.

It may be very naturally asked why it is not so translated in our English version. This is a pertinent question, and demands a satisfactory answer. The truth is, the word in the King James Version, is not translated, but transliterated. The King James Version is the work of the Church of England scholars. King James was the head of the Church of England. When the translators came to the word "baptizo," they agreed according to the suggestion, it is claimed, from the King that they would not translate the word, but simply Anglocise it. This they did, by the change of the letter "o" into

"e." As a result, we have the word baptize instead of the Greek word "baptizo." Had they dared to translate the word, they would have been forced to translate it "to dip," "to plunge," "to immerse."

There is a word that the Greeks used to designate "sprinkling," which was, and is, "rantizo." The meaning of this word was as well understood by them as the word "baptizo." Those who sprinkle, therefore, do not, in any sense, baptize, but "rantize." Hence they should be called "rantists," or "rantizers."

Let us now turn to the world's most scholarly commentaries, that we may get their understanding of the act of baptism. Probably no more learned commentary has ever been written than that of Meyer, who says: "To this, however, the immersion of the whole of the baptized person or the *metonia* was to purify the whole man, corresponded with profound significance, and to this the specially Christian view of the symbolical immersion and emersion afterwards, connected itself by an ethical necessity." John Calvin, in his Institutes, says: "The word baptize signifies to immerse, and it is certain that the rite to immerse, or of immersion, was observed by the ancient church."

John Wesley, in his notes on the New Testa-

ment, describes the act of baptism as follows:

"We are buried with Him, alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion.

Adam Clarke, easily the greatest commentator that has yet arisen among Methodists, says, concerning John's baptism: "That the baptism of John was by plunging the body (after the same manner of washing unclean persons, and the baptism of proselytes was) seems to appear from those things that are related of him; namely, that he baptized in Jordan because there was much water there, to which that seems to be parallel to Acts 8:38—Philip and the Eunuch went down into the water."

Dean Stanley, who had no superior as a scholar in the Church of England, in the past century, refers, in his *Christian Institutes*, to baptism as follows: "For the first thirteen centuries the almost universal practice of baptism was that of which we read in the New Testament, and which is the very meaning of the word baptize, that those who were plunged, submerged, immersed into water. That practice is still, as we have seen, continued in Eastern churches. In the case of John Wesley, whose religious movement, contrary to his own wishes, led to the founding of the Methodist church, not only claimed that the New Testament taught im-

mersion, but practiced what he taught. In his Journal for Georgia, February 21, 1736, he has this entry: "Mary Welch, aged eleven days, was baptized according to the custom of the first church and the rule of the Church of England, by immersion."

Dr. DeWitt Talmadge, perhaps the most prominent Presbyterian preacher of the last century, on being requested by Mr. Houston to baptize him just as Christ was baptized, immersed him in the River Jordan. The following is Dr. Talmadge's own account of this baptism, as it appears in the authorized history of his life:

"With that garment girdled around me, I led the candidate down under the trees on the bank, while near by were groups of friends and some strangers who happened to be there. After a prayer, I read of Christ's baptism in the Jordan, and the commission, 'Go teach all nations, baptizing them.' The people on the bank joined in singing, to the familiar tune, that soul-stirring song, 'On Jordan's Stormy Bank I Stand.' With the candidate's hand in mine, we waded deep into the Jordan, and I then declared: 'In this historical river, where Israelites crossed, and Naaman was plunged seven times for the cure of his leprosy, and Christ was baptized, and which has been used in all ages as a symbol

of the dividing line between earth and heaven, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.' As the candidate went down under the waves and then rose, I felt a solemnity that no other scene could have inspired."

It was our pleasure to talk, recently, with Mr. Houston, and to show him Mr. Talmadge's account of his baptism, with a photograph of the same. He confirmed the absolute accuracy of both.

It is worthy of note that the First Methodist Church of Lexington, Ky., has a baptistry.

It will also be seen that the symbolism of baptism absolutely demands immersion. The New Testament clearly teaches that baptism represents a death, burial and resurrection. If baptism does not signify the burial and resurrection of Christ, then there is no scriptural symbol commanded to symbolize this fact. This symbolism is plainly taught in Romans 6:4.

To meet the demands of New Testament baptism and fulfill its symbolism of the ordinance, there must be: (1) water; (2) a resurrection from the burial in water. There is, to us, no sweeter or more sacred sight to be witnessed on this earth, than to see a poor sinner, saved by

grace, following his Lord, buried in the liquid grave, thus testifying to a dying world that he is dead to sin, and that as Christ arose from the dead, he shall also rise to walk in the newness of life.

To destroy the Scriptural symbolism of baptism is to make it utterly meaningless and useless. Better no baptism than a baptism that teaches contrary to the commands of Christ. It may be replied that baptism is only a figure. Granted that this is true, it is likewise true that a figure represents something, and by changing the figure, it ceases to represent that for which it stood. The fact that baptism is a figure shows that it figures something. Tampering with facts and juggling with figures, are alike reprehensible, and often leads to serious trouble.

The utter folly of trying to force the Scriptures to teach sprinkling will further appear by substituting the word "sprinkling" for the word "baptize." If to baptize means to immerse, then we should be able to substitute the word "immerse" wherever the word "baptize" occurs in the New Testament. It is just as true that if the word baptize means to sprinkle, we should be able to substitute the word sprinkle for the word "baptize" wherever the word "baptize" occurs in the New Testament. The

worth and fairness of this conclusive test will readily commend itself to all fair-minded people. The following parallel columns tell their own story:

St. Matthew 3:16—

And Jesus	And Jesus	And Jesus
when he was	when he was	when he was
baptized, went	immersed, went	sprinkled, went
straightway out	straightway out	straightway out
of the water.	of the water.	of the water.

John 3:23—

And John was	And John was	And John was
also baptizing	also immersing	also sprinkling
in Aenon near	in Aenon near	in Aenon near
Salim because	Salim because	Salim because
there was much	there was much	there was much
water there, and	water there, and	water there, and
they came and	they came and	they came and
were baptized.	were immersed.	were sprinkled.

Acts 8:38—

And he com-	And he com-	And he com-
manded t h e	manded t h e	manded t h e
chariot to stand	chariot to stand	chariot to stand
still; and they	still; and they	still; and they
went down both	went down both	went down both
into the water,	into the water,	into the water,
both Philip and	both Philip and	both Philip and
the eunuch; and	the eunuch; and	the eunuch; and
he baptized	he immersed	he sprinkled
him.	him.	him.

Romans 6:4—

Therefore we	Therefore we	Therefore we
are buried with	are buried with	are buried with
him by baptism	him by immer-	him by sprink-

into death; that	like as Christ	was raised up	from the dead	by the glory of	the Father, even	so we also	should walk in	newness of life.
slon into death;	that like as	Christ was rais-	ed up from the	dead by the glo-	ry of the Fath-	er, even so we	a l s o should	walk in new-
ling into death;	that like as	Christ was rais-	ed up from the	dead by the glo-	ry of the Fath-	er, even so we	a l s o should	walk in new-

Col. 2:12—

Buried with	Buried with	Buried with
him in baptism	him in immer-	him. in sprink-
wherefore also	sion wherefore	ling, wherefore
ye are risen	also ye are ris-	also we are ris-
with him	en with him	en with him
through the	through the	through the
faith of the op-	faith of the op-	faith of the op-
eration of God,	eration of God,	eration of God,
who hath raised	who hath raised	who hath raised
him from the	him from the	him from the
dead.	dead.	dead.

The very fact that Baptist baptism is taken at full face value by all denominations, is an admission, on their part, that immersion is essential to baptism. Indeed, any denomination that receives Baptist baptism is estopped from denying the fact that Christ was immersed. Would it not be better for all to have a baptism that none can question? It is true, and we believe rightly, that many people have placed an interrogation point after every baptism other than that administered by Baptists. Why not act

in regard to our baptism as we do concerning our cash? Everyone wishes money about which there is no question. Very few would be disposed to accept money which many, and among them, a number of experts, believed to be counterfeit. Why not use the same judgment in connection with baptism?

If the many who are clamoring for union, at any price, are really in earnest in their contention, they need go no farther than the front seat in a Baptist church. Since they acknowledge Baptist baptism as Scriptural, why not unite on Baptist baptism? Here is a real opportunity for our uniontarian friends, and one that offers a conclusive test of their sincerity. "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.'

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